Whither New Social Organizations in Urban China?
The Structural Politics of Social Organizations in Urban China, post 1989

Vom Fachbereich
Gesellschaftswissenschaften
der Universität Duisburg-Essen
zur Erlangung des akademischen Grades

Dr. sc. pol.

genehmigte Dissertation

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Tag der mündlichen Prüfung: Feb. 5, 2008

To my wife Liyuan XU

ABSTRACT

In the last decade, the new social organizations (NSOs) in urban China stemming from conventional social organizations in association with remarkable institutional and social innovations have attracted increasing attentions from scholars, constituted of formal NGOs (mainly environmental NGOs), many more "asserting rights organizations" and informal NGOs.

From the perspective of structural politics, this dissertation deems such innovative social organization as the resulting structuration of the NSOs' autopoietic movement, and launches a Giddensian structuration approach to explore the three-level processes of NSOs' politicization: the rise of asserting rights movements, the construction of rational oppositional consciousness and new generation of liberal (movement) intellectuals, and the formation of NSOs' networks.

Using fieldwork investigations and observations, a twin activism was formulated as the rationale of NSOs' politicization: the online posting of e-forum participants and networking agitation of NSO's entrepreneurs. Such twofold habitualized behaviour functions as the micro-meso mechanisms of NSOs' category politics since the Internet become widespread in urban China from 1998 onward.

On this structuralist basis, we can draw out a duality of NSOs' structural politics in present-day urban China: an emerging morphogenetic civil society on the one side and a "late authoritarianism" on the other side. They inter-connect by the anti-authoritarian nature and deep structure of NSOs – which can be traced back to the 1989 democracy movements, which have revived and been transformed to NSOs' autopoietic movement and the new social movements since 1992 onward.

Key Words: China, New Social Organizations, New Social Movements, Social Network, Structuration, Late Authoritarianism

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

In der letzten Dekade haben die Neuen Sozialen Organisationen (NSOs) im urbanen China, die sich von herkömmlichen Sozialen Organisationen durch ihre bemerkenswerten Institutions- und Sozialinnovationen unterscheiden, zunehmende Aufmerksamkeit bei den Gelehrten erregt. Gegründet wurden die NSOs teilweise von einigen offiziellen NGOs (hauptsächlich Nicht-Regierungs-Umweltschutzorganisationen), doch noch viel häufiger von „Organisationen der Rechtserklärung“ („asserting rights organizations“), und nicht-offiziellen NGOs.

Aus der Perspektive der Strukturpolitik, betrachtet diese Abhandlung solche innovative Sozialorganisationen als Ergebnis der Strukturierung der autopoietischen Bewegung der NSOs und erforscht anhand Giddens Theorie der Strukturierung die Drei-Niveau-Verfahren der Politisierung der NSOs: der Aufstieg von „Rechtserklärungsbewegungen“, der Aufbau eines rationalen oppositionellen Bewußtseins mit einer neuen Generation der liberalen (Bewegung) Intellektueller, und die Bildung von Netzwerken der NSOs.

Von den Feldarbeitsforschungen beobachte und formuliere ich den Doppelaktivismus als die Interpretation der Politisierung der NSOs: die Online-Eintragung der Teilnehmer des E-Forums und die vernetzenden Handlungen der NSO-Unternehmer. Solche zwei habitualisierte Verhalten funktionieren als die Mikro-meso-Mechanismen der kategorialen Politik der NSOs, seit dem 1998 das Internet begann sich im urbanen China weit zu verbreiten.

Auf dieser strukturalistischen Grundlage können wir eine Dualität der strukturellen Politik der NSOs in heutigem urbanem China herausstellen: einerseits eine auftauchende morphogenetische Zivilgesellschaft, und anderseits einen „Late Authoritarianism“. Zusammengehalten wird diese Dualität durch die Mediation der antiautoritären Natur und der dichten Struktur der NSOs - dies kann in den Demokratie-Bewegungen im Jahre 1989 zurückverfolgt werden, die wieder belebt und umgewandelt zu der autopoietischen Bewegung von NSOs in den letzten 15 Jahren geführt haben.

Key Words: China, New Social Organizations, New Social Movements, Social Network, Structuration, Late Authoritarianism

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First of all, I thank my wife, Liyuan Xu, and owe deeply to my parents, Qingxin Wu and Laixian Cui. This dissertation could not have been written without their love, care, encouragement, and many inspired ideas during the past five years.

I am grateful to Prof. Dr. Thomas Heberer and Prof. Dr. Markus Taube, whose patience and strict requirements throughout five-year study shaped a homework-like draft to a qualified PhD dissertation. I would also like to thank Dr. Lun Du, Christian Göbel, Chungsik Yu, Yuhao Zhou, and Christiana Warmer, who have engaged with me in discussion and exploration of themes on the social-political transformation in China and other South-East Asian countries, and provided many concrete comments and advices. The colleagues in Deutsche Welle, Erning Zhu, Ming Shi and Yuelei Hu, and friends Michael Bauer Yi Liu and Chong Shan, who helped my work and life in Germany very much.

I would particularly like to acknowledge the “Internet friends” in Beiwang Academy (an online discussion group), Li Ben, Zhenhua Su, Jie Liang, Jinjing Jia, and Jin Liu. They not only offered help during my fieldwork in China, but, also, their communicative actions in association with my study on China’s Internet-based NSOs provided a rare space within which I could conduct participant observation to access the process how an online discussion group was transforming to an offline community.

Finally, I thank Jennifer Bradburn, who corrected the overall English writing before I formally submitted this dissertation.

Nevertheless, I am fully responsible for possible mistakes and omissions in this dissertation.

CONTENTS

ILLUSTRATIONS

Tables

Figures

ABBREVIATIONS

ACFTU All-China Federation of Trade Unions
AIDS Acquired immune deficiency syndrome
AYH Ai Yuan Hui
AZX Ai Zhi Xing (love-knowledge-action) Health and Education Institute
BBS Broadcasting Board System
BINGO Beijing Integrated NGO Support Forum
CANGO China Association for NGO Cooperation
CCP Chinese Communist Party
CCTV China Central Television
CDP China Democracy Party
CDU China Development Union
CMC Computer-mediated Communication
CNNIC China Internet Network Information Center
CPPCC Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference
CROs Civil Rights Organizations
CSOs Civil Society Organizations
CYLC Communist Youth League of China
CYDF China Youth Development Foundation
ECE Eastern and Central Europe
ENGOs Environmental NGOs
EU European Union
FAQ Frequently Asked Questions
FCEs Foreign-capital Enterprises
FLG Falun Gong
FON Friends of Nature
GCSH Grassroots Community in Shanghai
GDHA Guangdong Humanistic Association
GEF Global Environment Foundation
GEV Green Earth Volunteers
GGF Global Greengrants Fund
GONGOs Government-oriented Non-Governmental Organizations
GS General Secretary (of the Party)
GT Guan Tian Teahouse e-Forum
HIV Human Immunodeficiency Virus
ICPC Independent Chinese Pen Center
ICO Institute of Contemporary Observation
ICT Internet Communication Technology
IED Institute of Environment and Development
IEF International Energy Foundation
IFAW International Fund for Animal Welfare
IM Instant Message
INGOs International Non-Governmental Organizations
IP Internet Protocal
LEAD Leader of Environment and Development
LOH Light of Hope
MCA Ministry of Civil Affairs
MSN Microsoft Network

MUD Multi User Dungeon
NEs Network Entrepreneurs
NGOs Non-Governmental Organizations
NPC National People's Congress of PR China
NPOs Non-Profit Organizations
NSDAP National Socialist German Workers Party
NSOs New Social Organizations
NSMs New Social Movements
OCI Open Constitution Initiative
PDS Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus
PNEUs Private Non-enterprise Units (*minban fei qiye danwei*)
PSMOs Professional Social Movement Organizations
QQ Open ICQ (I seek you) or OICQ
QUANGO Quasi-Autonomous Governmental Organizations
RMT Resource Mobilization Theory
RRMSO Regulation for Registration and Management of Social Organizations
SAs Social Associations
SARS Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome
SDP Swedish Democratic Party
SEAs Student Environmental Associations
SEE Alashan Ecological Association
SENOL Scientific Exploration and Outdoor Life Society of Beijing Forestry University
SMOs Social Movement Organizations
SMS Short Message Service
SNA Social Network Analysis
SOs Social Organizations
SOEs State-Owned Enterprises
WWF World Wildlife Fund
WWW World Wide Web

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Background and design of dissertation

> "The idea of a self-adjusting market implied a stark utopia. Such an institution could not exist for any length of time without annihilating the human and natural substance of society; it would have physically destroyed man and transformed his surroundings into a wildness. Inevitably society took measures to protect itself, but whatever measures it took impaired the self-regulation of the market, disorganized industrial life, and thus endangered society in yet another way."
>
> -- Polanyi ([1957] 2001:3)

This chapter has three introductory tasks: The first is to launch the central question for the remaining part of this study; the second is to outline the theoretical perspectives and the theoretical hypotheses of this study; the third, sketch the basic structure of this dissertation.

1.1 Launch of the Central Question: corporatism or not?

In his "Interest Systems and the Consolidation of Democracies" (1992), Philippe Schmitter launches a three-fold criteria to account for the political space of the association system:

- the scale of associations, and the spanning tension of the conflict and cooperation between associations and agents;
- the strategic capacities;
- and the systematic structure of the associational politics.

Following Schmitter's line above, Croissant, Merkel and Sandschneider (1999) focus on the specific "process form of transformation" in which the development of civil society organizations (CSOs) is treated as the important dynamics of transformation, they shed light on the complexity of transition and the blur the distinction between the consolidation of democratization and the rising

of new forms of authoritarianism during the system transformation of post-communist ECE countries.

In Poland, for example, the recent studies of Kurczewski and Kurczewski (2001) show us that the "political-oriented" model of "Civil Society II" [1] in Poland can hardly account for the paradoxical under-development of the third sector in this country. Rather, as Glasman argues, who follows Karl Polanyi's two laws of the market, the market utopia may lead to atomisation of society and meanwhile take communitarian authoritarianism, namely paternalism, as the premise (Glasman, 1994:193-202). Therefore, though citizen rights and political rights had been clearly and fully endorsed, political elections in Poland had to face political apathy in recent elections (Staniszkis, 2000).

In most of the former Soviet Union, "former communist bosses have transformed themselves into elected presidents, but in reality they remain strongmen whose power is barely checked by weak democratic institutions" (Olcott and Ottaway, 1999). The concept of a transitional regime seems too broad and does not allow us to distinguish between regimes that have not yet fully consolidated their democratic institutions and those that have no intention of allowing that to happen. Such a "defected democracy" (Merkel et al., 2003) in these former Soviet Union countries, such as Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan, which are categorized into the "semi-authoritarian regimes" (Olcott and Ottaway, 1999), can therefore be precisely understood as the "electoral authoritarianism" in which the electoral authoritarian regimes not only permit limited forms of pluralism (civil society) but also open up political society (Schedler, 2006: 3, 5).

In this context, though few people would doubt the authoritarian nature to the present day that the "Chinese regime is still a Party-state, in which the Party penetrates all other institutions and

[1] That is so-called "*Civil Society-II*" according to the typology of Foley and Edwards (1996). Relative to the "*Civil Society-I*"referring to Tocquevillian self-governing civil organizations, the concept of "*Civil Society-II*" highlights the political system i.e. the state-society axis in the democratization.

makes policy for all realms of action" (Nathan, 2003:13), the rise of NGOs and more new social organizations (NSOs) since early 1990s have attracted attention both inside and outside academia, with concerns on their potential meaning on reshaping state-society relationship.

For example, plenty of attention was invested into the rise of "civic business associations" in association with the blooming private economy (Unger, 1996), especially those spontaneously-organized business associations in Wenzhou area (e.g. Chen and Ma, 2003, 2004a, 2004b; Wang et al., 2000). In particular, as Foster (2002b) illustrates, the organizational evolution of business association in Yantai city (a coastal city of Shandong province) in the transformational context may be characterized as the "embeddedness within state agencies" (Foster, 2002a).

Likewise, a panoramic research of the new industry and business associations on behalf of private enterprises leads to an analogous conclusion that the growing model of these business associations may be seen as a "market-endogenous middle-way" (Jia et al., 2004:102-23). Moreover, the private entrepreneurs in China appear to develop a "strategic interest group" (Heberer, 2003) in conjunction with the growing corporatism between this group and the state.

Extended to the whole emerging NSOs, the complexity above from the observation of the ECE countries' transition raises a theoretical question regarding the origin and path of the perhaps "morphogenetic civil society" in urban China, that is, whether the self-organization of Chinese urban society is subject to the corporative authoritarianism from the beginning on remains unclear yet. Are they only a result of the corporatism arrangement of the Party/state system that launched the policy to develop "social intermediary organizations" since 1992 or merely an indicator of the resilience of the ruling authoritarianism that could tolerate at least a façade of the limited pluralism in company with the market economy reform?

In addition to the puzzling historical origin of the still sceptical civil society in urban China, its possible or actual impacts upon the state-society relationship also confuses scholars who On the one hand, some argue that the corporatism tendency of the relationship between emerging NGOs

and the state, has revised the "state-led society" (Brook, 1997). For instance, Saich observes that the rising NGOs are "negotiating the state" under the "Leninist strategy of control" (Saich, 2000); Ma too holds the "corporatism governance" of China's NGOs (Ma, 2002a, 2002b). Pan goes further and sees the seemingly corporatism developments as a latest attempt of "consultative rule of law" towards "reforming authoritarianism" in Schubert's (2005) terms.[2]

On the other hand, while the corporatist accounts were doubted by only a few people like Heilmann (1999), many reports from China show significant developments to the contrary: contentious actions surged in recent years in which various new social organizations (NSOs) were involved (including some formal NGOs). Examples of this are the nationalist protests (Gries, 2004), increasing street protests of laid-off and aged workers of SOEs (Hurst and O'Brien, 2002), the collective actions organized by self-organized House-owner Associations (Pan, 2005), Internet-based pro-democracy protests and internet-based organizations (Yang, 2005). As a whole, they are labelled as an emerging "urban movement" (Liu, 2003). These grassroots movements are challenging the ruling authoritarianism, also the corporatism hypothesis. The observed corporatism arrangement between the Party/state and a few of formal NGOs or the semi-official SOs appears to be bound to the extent of the resilience of ruling authoritarianism that could maintain the existing social control system. For example, it is under the cooperation with the Ministry of Civil Affairs of China that some American pro-democracy NGOs were allowed to enter China (Shelly, 2000; Thurston, 1998).

Such a prominent change urges us to re-examine the corporatism hypothesis, and raises a central question in this dissertation: whether and to what extent the politics of emerging new social organizations could reshape the authoritarianism?

1.2 Design of Dissertation

1.2.1 Purpose and Objectives

[2] See also Pan, Wei (1999, 2001, 2003).

The purpose of this dissertation is to examine the (new) social organization politics in urban China, and to answer the question whether, how, and to what extent such emerging new social organizations (NSOs) have reshaped the ruling authoritarianism, and then to reach four objectives:

- To identify various kinds of new social organizations that emerge from conventional mainstream "social associations" after 1989;
- To trace the dynamic path of NSOs during the past nearly two decades. Particularly, I seek to frame the morphological change of NSOs, like a few number of formal NGOs in early 1990s, later the massive number of online discussion groups and then Internet-based NGOs, new liberal intellectual organizations and civil rights organizations in the early years of 21st century;
- To propose and examine a twin activism of NSO movements as the rationale of NSOs' structural politics, on the basis of the observations about specific structuration elements, such as the Internet, social movements, social networks, collective memory and such like;
- Finally, to discuss the implications of new social organization politics — how NSOs have reshaped China's authoritarian regime. Some crucial puzzling questions around China's NSOs and social-political transformation will be furthered, including the social origin of NSOs and the autopoietic nature of NSOs.

If the resilience to some extent of the authoritarian institution is recognized, the corporatist account on the institutionalism ground might be correct in explaining the institutional innovations that how NSOs stem from or differentiate from the conventional SOs, but it seems unable to explain whether or how such innovations could be institutionalized. Rather, the overall process of NSOs' evolution and associated social-political transformation in the past years after 1989 suggests an essentially structural transformation, or more precisely, the structuration of institutions in Giddens' phrasing. To disclose such a structural transformation hidden behind the rise of China's new social organizations is the very purpose of this dissertation.

1.2.2 Theoretical Perspectives

After the theory of civil society revived since 1989 (e.g. Cohen and Arato, 1992), the dualism distinction between the state and the civil society was centring the evolution line of civil society. The debate around the corporative perspective of the relationship between the Party/state and the emerging new social organizations in urban China also follows this dualism distinction. It can be rooted to Habermas' division between system and lifeworld (Habermas, [1984] 1988), as Craig Calhoun notes that "Habermas' ([1984] 1988) division of lifeworld and system is among the latest in the long series of binary oppositions used to characterize modern social life: *gemeinschaft* and *gesellschaft*, mechanical and organic, folk and urban, status and contract, traditional and modern" (Calhoun, 1991:97).

From Niklas Luhmann's (1984) perspective of social theory, these many categorical pairs can be understood in term of "interpenetration" between environment and system. This means that these two types of system enable each other reciprocally and influence the formation of structures within the other system. Assuming the lifeworld as a "structure-in-environment" as Neil Smelser put it (1988: 104-05), the whole new social organizations can be assumed as another system stemming from the lifeworld paralleling the authoritarian system, whose boundaries are defined by threefold social structures—corresponding to Scott's (1995) threefold categorizing of social institutions respectively—cognitive categories, collective actions, and social networks of constituency. They constitute a three-fold framework of NSO's structuration through which NSOs interpenetrate crossing authoritarian boundaries over time.

1. *Category Politics.* As a mechanism of NSO's politics, the category politics links the whole society and the NSO sector. Categories, as a basic form of social boundaries and political mechanism that can be rooted to the sociological tradition launched by Durkheim and Mauss

([1903] 1967) and Durkheim ([1912] 1995),[3] engage symbolic marking and social psychological categorizing in distinguishing specific social boundaries. Within the fields of identity politics and new social movement studies developed since early 1980s, in Charles Tilly's view, the categories help to distinguish two sets of constitutive mechanisms: "(1) those that precipitate boundary change and (2) those that constitute boundary change", and thus explain "the formation, transformation, activation, and suppression of social boundaries presents knotty problems" (Tilly, 2004a).

In a transformational society or system, the NSO per se as a newly created category is found to be associated with a bundle of other new social categories, such as NGOs, virtual communities and activists, the "social vulnerable groups", the "pro-asserting rights activists" and so on. And, the formation of NSO sector in practice, not bound to John Turner's (1985) social psychological account of social grouping, involves more structural elements or structural properties that are relating to the specific boundary-change, for example, the "institutional exclusion" imposed by the official-sponsored SOs[4] and the identity building of NSOs by means of collective identity, collective memory and computer-mediated communication.

2. *Social Movements (SMs).* The second perspective is connected to the contentious relation between the NSOs and the state, mainly social movements, i.e. non-institutionalized contentions mobilized by NSOs. However, by far, the social movement perspective is rarely used within the current mainstream studies of China's social politics. Indeed, it may reflect the fact in the 1990s that under restrictive control of social organizations, any organized contentions seemed to be an impossible mission after the massacre at Tian'anmen Square in 1989. But, without the SMs

[3] In Warren Schmaus's (2004) *Rethinking Durkheim and His Tradition*, he argued that Durkhiem and Mauss proposed that the most basic categories of thought, including space, time, class, and causality, are social in character, and their thesis had a profound impact on twentieth century thought, especially in the social sciences.

[4] For a long time, the concept "social organizations" in Chinese context has been over politicised by communist ideology, referring to the associations in a broad range, both official-sponsored and civic, both legally registered and illegally existing. According to official definition, the main body of "social organizations" in China, refers to those "mass associations" like Communist Youth League of China (CYLC) and Women's Federation, and officially controlled professional societies and industrial associations, deserving of political mobilization as CCP's assistants and social control of the authoritarian regime

perspective, it is also impossible to understand the essentially morphological change of NSOs that marked by a series of water shedding events crossing 1998/1999 the NSOs began to say good bye to the depoliticized era and then gradually involved deeply in a nationwide "civil rights" movement. If one takes the social movements as the politicization of the private life according to Habermas' notion regarding the new social movements in the 1960's Western Europe, the rise of rights movements in urban China also means a politicization of social organizations in its broadest sense in which NSOs as a whole are observed to transform toward social movement organizations (NSOs) over time.

3. *Social Networks.* Compared with the former cognitive and contentious perspectives, the relational perspective reaches the internal structure — the social network of NSOs and NSO agents. Through which, the quantitative method of social network analysis (SNA) as a supplement of the above qualitative analysis can be used to re-examine the social movements of NSOs.

Nevertheless, *guanxi*, the traditional identity and networks embedded upon Chinese culture and first noticed by Jacobs' (1979, 1982) political sociological studies of "particularistic ties" (*Guanxi*) in Chinese political alliance and local politics, has pioneered and channelled the social network perspective in studies of the past decade. For example, Bian (1994, 2001, 2002) terms it "*Guanxi* capital" in the labour market or other societal aspects; Wank and collaborators (2002) notice it has been the most important social bond in China's market economy era, as the *guanxi*-based "embeddedness and contractual relationships" indicate (Zhou, Zhao, Li and Cai, 2003).

Significantly, Ruan et al. (1997) observed what Walder (1986) disclosed that the *Unit System*-based social network (*guanxi*) began to be weakened during the market economy transition, and meanwhile, the on-going market economy was cultivating new social networks of urban residents alongside so-called increasing individualism — an alternative description of social atomisation.[5]

[5] As Heberer (1993) noted increasing individualism in early 1990s' China, but such individualism seems likely to be "selfism" in Wei Sen's (2003:88) view who borrows Fei Xiaotong's (1945) explanation of "selfism" culture in China's societal history.

However, whether and how such conventional *Guanxi* networks are involving in or shaped by the ongoing transformation—toward civil-society-like social networks, for instance, or being utilized by NSOs—remains unclear.

1.2.3 Assumption and Hypotheses

Methodologically, as Luhmann proposes that interpenetrating systems converge in individual elements (Luhmann [1984] 1995:215), this study follows the assumption of structural individualism, more precisely, a weak version of structural individualism held by Coleman (1990). This methodological individualism, being distinguished from the dominant holistic method in sociological studies, was first launched by Wippler's essay in 1978, "Nicht-intendierte soziale Folgen individueller Handlungen", and then formulated by Coleman (1986, 1990).

Such a methodological postulation of a reciprocal relationship between personal behaviour and collective outcomes may be traced back to the line of Hobbes-Smith-Mill-Mengel-Weber-Schumpeter-Hayek-Watkins and can be understood in three phases: (a) "psychic states are explained in terms of social structure, (b) individual behavior is explained in terms of psychic states, and (c) the behavior of the social system is explained in terms of the actions of individuals." (Udehn, 2002: 493-94)

Following Coleman's hypothesis of methodological individualism, I see NSO actors as the agents of NSOs and also the basic analysis units, and the existing social structure as an exogenous variable. The collective actions are assumed to be cognitively integrated individual actions rather than aggregated,[6] as the outcome of the social environment namely the social institutions of authoritarian control. It is, in part, because the coercive control of the authoritarian regime (environment) tends to impose upon individuals directly, and the face-to-face communication and

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From their view, the "selfism" that is revived in market society instead of western-style "individualism" does mirror the increasingly social atomisation.

[6] In his 1991b essay, DiMaggio distinguished the integration and aggregation.

inter-personal relations still matter as the key to grouping during which the "personality is a form of organization in a complex environment" (Burt, 1992: 269).

For the sake of exploring the transformation of social organizations, the structural individualism may help us in four ways: **(1)** Firstly, borrowing Berger and Luckmann's insight that the institution as the outcome, or end state, of the institutionalisation process can be defined "a reciprocal typification of habitualized action by types of actors", I turn to the early stage of institutionalisation — the habitualization process of individual cognitive behaviour as the outcome of interaction between "internal cognitive representations" and the environment. The "habitualization" then has a twin conception in Bourdieu's sense, both institutional and structural. Here, the institution may be better understood as a "cognitive-institution" in Douglass North's (1990) sense.

(2) I can thus introduce the concept of entrepreneur into this study as a basic unit in our structural-analysis. Such individualist, actor-centred structural analysis is used to account for how NSO entrepreneurs as NSO agents mobilized "institutional-structural" resources for radical social change. Despite the fact that the concept of entrepreneur is developed from rational choice theory,[7] I do not take constant individual preference for granted. Rather, in an ongoing transformational context, individual transformation (i.e. the formation of NSOs' entrepreneurs) weighs as high as institutional transformation.

(3) The methodological individualism does not mean I reject collective concepts. The NSO agency is collective or social, but I hypothesize that the collective actions or organizations are of specific forms of shared knowledge, shared consciousness, and shared social bonds. They tend to be legitimated instead of institutionalized when confronting the changing environment (Tolbert and Zucker, 1994). Expanding on this, the inter-organizational relations can thus be reduced to a

[7] It is analogous to the "actor-centred institutionalism" launched by Fritz Scharpf (1997). In Scharpf's *Games Real Actors Play: Actor-Centered Institutionalism in Policy Research,* his approach of "actor-centred institutionalism" links to game theory analysis of policy network.

network relation as it is applied for individual actors. Likewise, the individual-group relations can be simplified to an inter-individual relation.

(4) And last but perhaps most important, the methodological hypothesis of structural individualism allows inquiry into the psychic state and evolution of individuals and groups. That is to say, structural individualism should be compatible with the structuration theory. Then, one can explore the "deep structure" of NSOs from limited cases of NSO activists, such as the collective memory and collective identity of NSO activists, rather than merely bounded to "static ties among inert substances" (Emirbayer, 1997: 289) without dynamic formation processes of social networks and network evolution.

Then, with the benchmark of Giddens' notion that "the structuration of institutions can be understood how it comes about that social activities become 'stretched' across wide spans of time-space" and "the time-space boundary usually having symbolic or physical markers" (Giddens 1984: xxi, 10), this dissertation attempts to advance two hypotheses around internal and external structuration, which are assumed to be framed in three perspectives as previously mentioned—social boundaries (categories), social actions (movements), and social networks (referring to the structure in the strict sense of the term).

Hypothesis-1: The group of NSO entrepreneurs locates the centre of the three-level structuration of NSOs namely the transformation of the structural politics of social organizations in urban China after 1989. Behaving as the agents of emerging NSOs, they organize, categorize, link, and thus constitute the "deep structure" (Sewell, 1992) of NSOs and then define the boundaries, dynamics and structure of the NSO sector in differentiation from conventional SOs. In this respect, I hypothesize a three-layer NSO entrepreneurship: the claim-making of new social norms, agitating actions and networking. They constitute the dual activism of NSO entrepreneurs, i.e. networking agitation. From this structural individualism rationale in the micro-meso level of structuration, the

institutional innovations or organizational transformation of NSOs may be viewed as the "surface structure" of NSOs in Sewell's (1992) phrasing.

Hypothesis-2: After the computer-mediated communication (CMC) became popular in urban China since the late 1990s, the Internet should be deemed as perhaps the most important indigenous variable for the structuration of NSOs. Specifically, the Internet-based communication, as a basic structuration process, is supposed to function in mediating the self-categorization of NSO activists, cultivating the subjective roots of social protests, habitualizing the activism of social movements and networking the NSOs.

That is to say, communication as a primary structuration may conceive "a virtual order of differences produced and reproduced in social interaction as its medium and outcome" (Giddens, 1979:3). The whole structure, in Giddens' view, existing only as memory traces and as instantiated in action (Giddens, 1984:377), can be understood to be endogenous and historically inherent within the Chinese social-political context. The habitualization of certain communicative actions cultivated in an absolutely new "oppositional culture" may provide an alternative reasoning of activism beyond what McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly formulated as three-fold activism of social movements (see McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly, 1988: 707-09). Along this "virtuality" line of NSOs' structuration, the social origin of NSOs and then the nature of NSO-associated contentious politics in present-day China could be recognized.

1.2.4 Method and Data

Because "typically a network analysis is a case study" (Breiger, 2004), this dissertation simultaneously adopts two qualitative methods: case (event) study and social network analysis (SNA). They are inter-supported and crossover in this dissertation, mainly in chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7. The case study is used to analyze the governance structure and social construction of typical NSOs and actors, and the formation of NSOs and NSMs that were represented in the episodic events.

However, if assumed the continuum in the development of China's social organizations, Giddens notion should be kept in mind that, "To study structuration is to attempt to determine the conditions which govern the continuity and dissolution of structures or types of structure." (Giddens, 1977:120,121) It requires explanations of reorientation from episodes to processes and more structural methods to explore the structural change.

The method of SNA, being used to visualize structural diagrams of NSO networks and cluster evolution, does not use statistical approach to process random samples, but, rather, relies on selected vertex, namely selected interviewee and specific relational information by means of interview.[8] It follows that the computational analysis could be applied in processing network data and visualizing NSO networks.

So, the data are collected mainly on the basis of interviews with NSO's activists, participant observation, online participant observation and tracing, and documentary materials. The documentary materials include the publications of those NSOs *per se*, the second-hand case studies and newspapers, containing massive information about the cases of NSOs. The online participant observation has lasted three years since this research project began in 2001, keeping continuous tracing to a number of NSOs and NSO activists over a broad range. It is an alternative fieldwork via Internet Explorer and email to filter out sampling online discussion groups (BBS), NSOs, and actors, involving over 20 BBS/websites that were kept tracing between 2000 and 2005.

Though collecting data from the Internet was considered a very easy procedure (e.g. Köhler, 1999), it might only be correct without the need for further information (Orthmann, 2000). Instead, to identify and trace those highly dispersed users of chatrooms and BBS may raise "many technological and methodological problems" (Orthmann, 2000), for instance, the difficulties in

[8] In "The Analysis of Social Network" (collected in *Handbook of Data Analysis*, edited by Melissa Hardy and Alan Bryman, Sage Publications, 2004, pp.505-26), Ronald Breiger argues the study of social structure seems easily "misled by reliance on random samples wrenched out of their embedded interactional context…In contrast to random samples, full data on the presence or absence of social relations among all the members of a bounded population is often required, and network analysts have formulated the problem of boundary specification (Laumann et al., 1983; Marsden, 1990) in an effort to gain analytical leverage on this requirement."

conducting qualitative content analysis and social network analysis in the long run. Clearly, online fieldwork is unable to replace face-to-face interviews. In this study, the online investigation and observation mainly help to collect background information, filter out sampling NSOs and NSO activists and then build connections in the preparation phase.

The fieldwork was organized, conducted and financed by myself, carried out from March to May in 2004 and from February to March in 2006. Beginning from a small number of "seeds", the approach of "snow-balling" was used to expand the target interviewee list and build connections and trust with them, involving over 90 NSO activists by both formal and informal interviews in the first ten weeks of fieldwork.

In sum, I conducted over 50 formal face-to-face interviews with 36 NSOs in 8 cities—Hangzhou, Shanghai, Beijing, Xi'an, Baoji (near Xi'an), Chengdu, Guangzhou and Shenzhen. Besides Beijing, four were eastern or southern coastal cities, three were inner cities in western or southwestern China. (See Figure 1.1)

Figure 1.1: The distribution of case study areas
Source: The Chinese map is cited from CIA Handbook-China, available in: http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/ch.html.
• Beijing, Shanghai, Hangzhou, Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Chengdu, Xi'an.

Among 36 interviewed NSOs, 12 are famous local environmental NGOs (ENGOs), 4 international NGOs (INGOs), 9 civil rights NGOs, 3 householders' committees, 2 hobby clubs, 2 intellectual associations and 4 internet-based organizations. Most of them have good reputation in their fields. However, such categorizing overlaps to an extent. For example, in those 12 environmental NGOs, 5 are actually Internet-based "virtual organizations". Also, a large number of INGOs I contacted in

my fieldwork are ruled out from formal interviews, but still to be mentioned in the following analysis.

A typical interview tended to last 45 minutes to 90 minutes. Only three interviews were under thirty minutes. 15 in-depth interviews were open-ended and semi-structured, lasting from two hours to four hours. Of the 53 interviews, 38 were digitally recorded and transcribed; the others were only transcribed if the interviewee demanded it.

My intended questions were in relation to their organizational development, personal ideas about institutions and social movements, the relation network of participants and organizations and individual memories of events that took place in 1989. Most of the interviews focused on the situation between 1999 and 2004, but those in-depth interviewees were questioned back to the 1980s. A typically full interview consists of three aspects:

- the basic information on the interviewee and related organizations;
- the specific questions based on *ex ante* investigation and simultaneous talk and discussion, with a focus on organizational evolution and personal recognition; and
- the post-interview questions to test earlier talks, also including personal review about situation of other NGOs.

The second round of fieldwork lasted four week crossing February and March of 2006, aiming to collect supplementary information from the high-profie NSO activists who were too politically sensitive to visit in the first round of investigation, and some key people for post-interview who were currently experts in related fields or had been interviewed in the first fieldwork.

1.2.5 Scope, Innovations, and Limitations

Scope

Though this study aims to disclose the structural evolution of the new social organizations (NSOs) as a specific transformation process of China's society, it is not a panorama-like research covering all social organizations in China. Rather, it is confined to NSOs in Chinese cities vis-à-vis the conventional social organizations. Those officially recognized social associations and groups, official foundations, official industry associations, churches and religion organizations, CCP-sponsored labour unions and other CCP's periphery organizations, etc., are excluded from my intended range.

Likewise, the widely used term of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) is also strictly limited in use. It only makes sense within NSOs, where they refer to those NSOs which are independent, non-profit and for public benefit formal organizations, nevertheless often registered as business entities, against the benchmark of Salamon's five-fold criteria.[9] They are usually viewed by international academics as the mainstream of emerging new social organizations, or civil society organizations, in present-day China.

However, compared to NGOs, the rest of the NSOs, mainly informal NGOs (most of them evolved from the online discussion groups), carry similar weight in this study. They lack formal organizational form, precise statistics and sufficient attention from the international society, but actually have increasing influence in the "asserting rights movements". In the remainder of this dissertation the conflicting definitions around NSOs will be discussed in details.

It follows that so-called NSOs are limited to the new social organizations that emerged after 1989/1992. That is to say, this study focuses on the past 15 years, i.e. the social-political process of "great transformation" occurred post 1989/1992. It is also the comparable context in which one can examine transformation-associated concepts and theories in post-communist studies of China and the ECE countries, like corporatism, authoritarianism, civil society, democratization, and such like.

[9] Widely accepted, Salamon and Anheier (1997) defined NGO as an entity with 5 aspects: ①organized, ②private, ③non-profit distributive, ④autonomy, ⑤voluntary.

Innovations

In short, we may expect this research to bring the distinct innovations in at least two areas:

Innovation-1: Using the approach of SNA (social network analysis), this research observes two distinguished phenomena and advances two networking hypotheses regarding the formation of China's new social organizations:

- Contrary to Uwe Matzat's argument that a successful online community relies on being socially embedded in a "real life community",[10] the process of societal self-organization in urban China is found within which the pre-existing social relations are not necessary for the formation of online communities;

- Those NSO entrepreneurs, actually functioning as the "network entrepreneurs" in Ronald Burt's (2002) sense "who build interpersonal bridges across structural holes", tend to develop the "semi-strong ties" between themselves or NSO activists rather than the "weak ties" as Burt holds (Burt, 1992:30), during the construction of the "detached identity" of citizenship and the mobilization of campaigns asserting universal citizenship.

Innovation-2: Combining Giddens' structuration theory and Luhmann's social system theory, this research attempts to develop a multi-layer structuration framework of the structural politics of (new) social organizations in present-day China. This cognitive framework helps us observe NSOs' transformation trajectory and the social dynamics of NSOs' contentious politics, find that the self-reproduction of NSOs is forming, i.e. the Luhmannian autopoietic tendency in opposition to the authoritarian state-led society, and then falsify the "new corporatism" argument concerning the relation between the NGOs and the authoritarian state.

Limitations

[10] Cf. Uwe Matzat's dissertation, "Social networks and cooperation in electronic communities: A theoretical-empirical analysis of academic communication and internet discussion groups", 2002, University of Groningen (The Netherlands).

The limitations of this research are derived from the research methods. First of all, among about 50 formal interviews, the number of the informants of those high-profile dissidents or liberal intellectuals who were believed to be crucial for the reconstruction of social memory and the emergence of the central circle of NSOs, were still very limited (less than 15). Their highly political sensitiveness meant to raise the authority's attention and intervention during my investigation, as I was encountered when interviewed with Wang Yi and Liu Xiaobo.

On the other hand, the very limited budget of investigation has two negative effects: it is almost impossible to collect large-scale samples that is required for ordinary SNA approach; and the quantitative analysis of SNA is confined to a limited use in displaying or depicting social diagram of the network structure of NSOs. The Pajek—a special SNA software adopted in this study, developed by Batageli and his colleagues—is mainly used for qualitative analysis rather than large-scale data processing. Nevertheless, further quantitative research in the future is required on the basis of large-scale data collection to re-examine the above conclusions.

The third limitation exists in Internet studies where there is a lack of further technological information and institutional analysis of Internet censorship. It may probably hamper readers from understanding the restrictive circumstances that China's Internet-based NSOs and Internet activists encounter in everyday life, and then the prominent social-political implications of "semi-strong ties" developed by them via online and offline communications. It also raises some problems during data collecting from Internet over years, as many original posts (as the direct evidence) have been erased by the Internet censoring agency.

The fourth, much more dispersed street protests and collective actions against corruption, social-injustice, abuse of state violence and such like are largely overlooked in this study, because most of them were not recorded by Chinese and international media. Nevertheless, they should be compatible with the conclusion of this research.

1.3 Structure of the Dissertation

The whole dissertation consists of three parts and eight chapters, including two macro variables and three independent variables—or more precisely, three predictor variables. The former two refer to the authoritarian control of the Party-state and the morphology of NSOs. The latter three are the incentives of actors (mainly cognitive change of NSO entrepreneurs as a predictor variable), inter-actor relation and in turn, inter-organizational relations. They jointly affect the dependent variables (i.e. outcome variables or grouping variables), such as categories, networks, organizational forms and strategies, etc.

Part 1 begins with three introductory and contextual chapters. The first chapter outlines the basic question, design and structure of this dissertation. The second chapter aims to elaborate three theoretical perspectives: categories, social movements and social networks, which frame the following chapters correspondingly.

Focusing on the category pair of NSOs and mainstream SOs, chapter 3 is to distinguish the rise and fall of SOs and the four-stage development of NSOs in the last one and a half decades and then to discuss the institutional innovations of NSOs on the level of institutional differentiation.

Part 2 studies the social dynamics of NSOs' structuration and structural politics. Using Schmitter's (1992) threefold criteria, chapters 4, 5 and 6 address three aspects from organizations to agents and then the contentious politics of NSOs. They correspond to the three structures in turn: legitimation, self-categorization, and politicization. Chapter 7 is a supplementary chapter.

In chapter 4, I intend to frame the deorganization of NSOs along dual boundaries between NSOs and the environment: professionalism and platformalization. They legitimize NSOs' innovations and differentiate NSOs from conventional SOs.

Chapter 5 turns to the social psychological structure of NSO agents, exploring how the Internet-based communication and network complete the self-categorization of NSO agents—how

the Internet-based communication and actions of NSO actors (as the third independent variable) cultivate and construct two paralleling identity structures of the "heterotopia" of NSOs since 1998: the formation of virtual communities and e-NSOs, and the formation of a new generation of young liberalist intellectuals.

Chapter 6 focuses on the third structure—NSOs' politicization occurring along the boundaries of NSOs and the authoritarian regime. It is relating the third modality of structuration—the new social movement surged after 1989 (namely "asserting rights movements") as the vehicle of the contentious politics of NSOs. The category politics of movements as the core of NSOs' structuration, also as the rationale of movements, is explored in this chapter.

Chapter 7 unravels a deep structure during the NSOs' creation—the agents-in-focus, namely NSOs' network entrepreneurs, and their networking agitation. Differentiated along the basis of many-to-many communication on which chapter 3 relies, this chapter attempts to represent different trajectories of the social grouping processes of NSOs. It points to the category politics of a central network (submerged network) of NSO networks.

In Part 3, the concluding chapter 8 aims to summarize the above discussion about the implications of NSOs politics on the existing authoritarianism. From the direct (or technological) conlusion about the anti-authoritarian autopoiesis of NSO system, I deduce a duality of NSOs' structural politics: a morphogenetic civil society and a "late authoritarianism" of present-day China. Such a conclusion remains open for our understanding of the nature and trend of China's ruling authoritarianism in the expectable long run.

Chapter 2

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

Framing structural transformation

> "Systems have boundaries. This is what distinguishes the concept of system from that of a structure."
>
> ---Niklas Luhmann ([1984] 1995:28)

Borrowing Giddens' hypotheses of the "duality of structure" and "structuration theory", this chapter attempts to frame the complex of NSOs' institution-structure and address three basic modalities of the structuration—categories, social movements and social networks. The categories account for the claim-making process of NSOs and social movements; the social movements provide the dynamic perspective of the transformation of NSOs and the formation of NSOs' contentious politics; and the social networks unveil the relational structure of social movements.

This chapter begins with the literature overview of current studies of China's NSOs with the focus on tracing the morphogenesis of NSOs, and then examines the specific theories that are relating the process of the structural politics of NSOs that emerged and went further crossing the past one and a half decades, and penetrating the "institution-structure" of authoritarian control over society in urban China.

2.1 Literature Overview: the debates around the origin of NSOs

Since CCP launched the liberalism reform in 1978 and the market economy in 1992, the last fifteen years have witnessed the officially recognized "social organizations"(SOs) developing to over 200,000 at their peak in the late 1990s.[11] At almost the same time, such a development of China's

[11] Recorded registered social associations have never been more than 200,000, although the MCA acknowledged that the estimated various "civic organizations" in real life might approach one million in total. By the end of 2004, the officially reported SOs were 153,000, PNEUs 135,000, public foundations less than 100. See Shi (2000:16,36) and MCA's report, available at: http://www.chinanpo.gov.cn/web/showBulltetin.do?id=19297&dictionid=1908.

SOs attracted plenty of attentions within the field of modern China studies, as the theory of civil society revived soon after the former Soviet bloc collapsed (e.g. Cohen and Arato, 1992).

Influenced by the revival of civil society theory, especially the Polish Solidarity-like politicized "Civil Society II" by which people recalled Hegel and Marx's theories of civil society and Habermas' (1984) distinguishing between system/life world, its dualist variant of distinguishing between the state and society began to take the place of state-centralism paradigm within the mainstream studies of China's social politics, mirroring the significant growth of social space.

Over the last fifteen years, such distinguishing of state and society caused primary concerns on the twofold political implication of auto-organizations in urban space: On the one hand, it was how the liberal intellectuals and private entrepreneurs organized and participated the democratic movements in 1980s especially 1989's student movementx (see Whyte, 1992; He, 1997; Wank, 1995; Unger, 1996); On the other hand, it was whether and to what extent the emerging grassroots organizations were reshaping the state-society relation in 1980's and 1990's market economy (see Gu, 1994; Davis et al., 1995). Various new forms of new social organizations emerged and became the focus, for example, the urban *qigong* associations (Chen, 1995), alumni associations and hometown associations (Whyte, 1992), business associations (Foster, 2002), and various NGOs (e.g. Howell, 1995; Kang, 1997; Ma, 1998; Saich, 2000; Wang and He, 2004).

Among the studies on NGOs, a noteworthy new corporatist account stemmed from the state-centralism (e.g. Skocpol's statist revolutionary studies, 1979), which maintained the "state-led society" (Brook, 1997) and largely rejected the possibility of civil society within China's extremely restrictive authoritarianism. In their view, to distinguish NGOs and SOs seemed no sense because the existing large-scale officially registered SOs might be equated with NGOs as well the counterpart in the West. Therefore it is not surprising that they tended to conclude that either NGOs or SOs were "negotiating the state" (Saich, 2000) in favour of "corporatism governance" (Ma, 2002a, 2002b). In the case of China Youth Development Foundation (CYDF), for instance, a

Government-Organized NGO (GONGO) founded by Communist Youth League of China (CYLC), was viewed by Qiusha Ma as a representative of a "new style of social organizations" whose "cooperation with the CYLC is crucial to the CYDF's success" (Ma, 2002a: 128).

The concept of new corporatism, may be traced back to the "state corporatism" launched by Schmitter in 1974. In his seminal paper titled "Still the Century of Corporatism?" Philippe C. Schmitter defined corporatism as "a system of interest and/or attitude representation, a particular modal of ideal-typical institutional arrangement for linking the associationally organized interests of civil society with the decisional structures of the state" (Schmitter, 1979: 9). Since then, beyond unionism or liberal corporatism, Schmitter's conception of state corporatism hailed as an effective model of governance in the state-centralism in affluent countries, both democratic and non-democratic (Streeck and Kenworthy, 2005).[12] The conjuntion of two paralleling sphere of political society and civil society thus become a theoretical arena the new corporatism versus social movements (contentious politics).

However, as Streeck and Kenworthy (2005: 458) note, such an ideal type of state corporatism in practice "is bound up with the ongoing transformation of social structure on the one hand and of the nation-state on the other". For example, in Pinochet's Chile, the civil society, which is often seen as a key factor leading the transition of authoritarian institutions, gave support to the authoritarian regime or their allies (Linz and Stepan, 1996:212). Given the restrictive but resilient authoritarianism in China, whether the hypothesis of new corporatism makes sense for the incremental civil society organizations (CSOs) or NSOs might still be dependent on the structure of civil society per se. From this point, according to the different distance between the Party/state and CSOs, the studies of China's CSOs in the last decade may be identified into three categories as follows:

[12] See Philippe Schmitter (1971), Alfred Stepan (1978), and James Malloy (ed.,1978).

1. *Transplanted NGOs*. The first, having outlined thoroughly from the imperial period to red China in the 1990s, Timothy Brook (1997:39) argued that the "suppression of June 1989 marked an abrupt setback of common-cause organizing". The "common cause organization" here in fact refers to NGOs. The development of local NGOs in China in the 1990s therefore might rely heavily on international NGOs.

In this view, the social organizations consist of two separate parts: the officially registered conventional social associations on the one side; and translated NGOs on the other. The latter are sponsored and recognized by international NGOs. As Howell (1997:208) observed, at almost the same time, there were few development-oriented NGOs "which had grown from below…set up by non-Party/state professionals", whilst foreign NGOs sought to "initiate or fund" development-oriented NGOs in China. One may easily conclude if there was any meaningful civil society in forming in China it must had been imported from the international society.

2. *Social organizations*. Another extreme was represented by Ma (1998), and Wang and He (2004), who saw NGOs as being equivalent to so-called "social organizations". For them, the term NGO, being introduced into China from 1995 as a new rhetoric of these "social organizations", only made sense to maintain the spontaneousness hypothesis of civil society (Ma, 1998) or to support the hypothetical (new) corporatism (Ma, 2002b).

For instance, from Ma's early stance, virtually all-200,000 SOs in existence by 1996 should be categorized into NGOs (Ma, 1998), henceforth the structural differentiation between large-scale official SOs (or semi-official SOs) and independent NGOs were largely blurred.[13] In recent years, he moves to another extreme pole and holds that "The introduction of Western theories and concepts such as civil society, corporatism, the third sector, and autonomy… these theoretical frameworks may also limit our ability to see China's uniqueness. The evolution of social

[13] Ma Qiusha (Oberlin College, Ohio), in his 2002a essay, has admitted what he holds in his earlier paper treating "social associations" within Chinese political context as NGO might not be proper. However, in the two latest international conferences—the third ISTR Asia Pacific Regional Conference and the APPC(Asia Pacific Philanthropy Consortium) opened in Beijing in the Fall of 2003, we could still observe such theoretical confusing.

organizations in China has its own features and problems shaped by the country's political and cultural history" (Ma, 2002a).

3. *New social organizations*. Lying in between of two positions above, Saich, who tends to use the term "new social organizations" instead of NGOs, emphasizes the negotiating relationship between them and the Party/state. He notices that such a negotiating relationship is developed from new social organizations, which "minimizes state penetration and allows such organizations to reconfigure the relationship with the state…" under circumstance of tightly authoritarian control of all forms of associations (Saich, 2000: 125). In this sense, for Saich, there were two "groups" of China's NGOs that at least one group NSOs transformed from conventional "social organizations" and affiliated institutions. Saich's view, hereby, has admitted indigenous origin of China's NGOs to some extent.

However, China's NSOs, most of them developed in the recent past, e.g. the "asserting rights" organizations (namely civil rights NGOs in a broad sense) which were fostered since the late 1990s in association with the civil rights movements (namely the "asserting rights movements" in China) since 2003, has almost fulfilled Salamon's fivefold criteria of true NGOs. From the perspective of political space, their "rights"-centred claim-making shows us an alternative way vis-à-vis the corporatist cooperation under authoritarian control.

Similarities can be found in authoritarian Brazil in the late 1990s where, "the prominence of social over political and civil rights made room for a pattern of interaction between authority and solidarity that some have described as state corporatism" (Reis, 2000). Likewise, the "civil rights-oriented" contentious politics in China have differentiated these "asserting rights organization" from the "negotiating politics" or "consultative rule" as Saich (2000) and Pan (2003) argued. They have profoundly gone furtherer than the depoliticized and transplanted INGOs do in China.

Then, what is the probable structurally coherent line of China's NGOs? Should we see the latest pro-rights politicization of China's NGOs as a re-politicization or revival of the 1980's democratic movement — if we are assuming a continuum of China's NGOs and those pro-democracy organizations in the 1980s?

2.2 Structuration Theory: an approach framing social organizations

Since the concept and theory of "structuration" first appeared in 1976 in *New Rules of Sociological Method* (Giddens, 1976), structuration theory has reached a decisive point in its trajectory (Stones, 2005: 2). As Rob Stones notes, it encounters a negative target at the theoretical level in recent years whilst at the empirical level the structuration theory still achieves overwhelming success in various fields (ibid).

However, such a seemingly "out-of-date" situation of structuration theory should not deter us from the purpose of using it in dealing with the on-going transformation from the Marxist-Leninist socialist state to the "red capitalists" or "populist authoritarianism" in China (Dickson, 2003, 2005). Both ontologically and cognitively, the possible emerging independent social force of NSOs may just echo what the structuration theory attempts to do, whereby it supersedes Marxist or modern structuralism variants and regards the "reproduction of social relations" and practices "as a mechanical outcome, rather than an active constituting process…" that "social structures are both constituted by human agency, and yet at the same time are the very medium of this constitution" (Giddens, 1977: 121).

It points to the central concept in Giddens' structuration theory, that is, the "duality of structure", which Giddens' structuration theory is based on. According to him, "Structure presumes continuity of social reproduction across time and space, *but it is the medium of such reproduction as well as its outcome*" (Giddens, 1991b: 204; Italic added). Also, the structuration "refers abstractly to the dynamic process whereby structures come into being" (Giddens, 1977:121).

Among one of Giddens' followers, Stones (2005) introduces "a quadripartite cycle" of structuration to conceptualize the notion of duality of structure. According to Stones, the quadripartite cycle involves four elements as follows:

1) External structure as conditions of action;
2) Internal structure within the agent;
3) Active agency, including a range of aspects involved when an agent draws upon internal structures in producing practical action;
4) Outcomes (as external and internal structures and as events). (Stones 2005: 9)

Within the above quadripartite structure, the internal structure and agent's practices locate in the middle of external structure and outcomes of structuration, highlighting the "agent-in-focus" in "position-practice relation". The external structure functions here as conditions of action and thus largely equates with the institutional constraints to agents and practices.

In the long run, the "position-practice relation" tends to be habitualized toward what Giddens called the "institutionalized structural properties" of *"stabilized relationships among agents/actors across time and space*" (Giddens, 1984: xxxi, Italic added). Then, the structural properties of agent-in-focus may contain the origin of concrete institution-structure on the one side because, "structure captures the reversibility of time", according to Luhmann's distinction between structure and process (Luhmann, [1984] 1995:44). On the other side, alongside the specific horizon of time and space, which is conceived to combine the internal and external, also the past and present, the events—as the observable outcome of structuration in which the structural properties and agents display together temporally—and structures (structural changes) are reciprocally complementary to each other during the system formation (ibid: 77,78, 289).

Events

Given the emphasis on distinguishing between internal and external structure, the outcomes in real life refer to events that range along the overlapping part of internal and external structure. In

Luhmann's view of social theory, "systems are composed of events and can transform themselves through them" (ibid: 353). "Events" as a basic episodic unit involve situated and relational practice in concrete time-space, thus link the structural change and process.

Here, the events reflect the system state and complement the structure (ibid: 67, 289-290) and refer to concrete turning-points in association with the meaningful change around institution-structure boundaries, regardless of their impacts upon personal level or organizational level or societal level. Luhmann states that, "one can view changes as events only if the difference before and after can be condensed to an identity that cannot itself change and that occupies a greater or lesser temporal space in which the change is carried out" (ibid: 353). That means events indicate interaction between external and internal structure and then the outcomes (also mediate) of structuration (Stones, 2005:85).

Highlighting the interaction along boundaries between internal and external structure, through events, the structuration process appears to be an "episodic transformation" [14], in which "the event occurs in a process only if it comes about thanks to the selectivity of earlier and later events" (ibid: 450). Though the key event "has occurred at any given moment loses its explanatory value but gains a predictive value... an observer can detect movements, follow melodies, and figure out what is going on to be said" (ibid:450-1). To a large extent, events here not only comprise the opportunities and outcomes of structural change, but in particular, constitute the observable processes of NSOs' episodic transformation. Therefore, using this approach, one can assume the episodic transformation as the specific "process form of transformation" with reference to the post-communist transformation (Croissant, Merkel and Sandschneider, 1999: 337).

Institution-Structure

[14] See David Jary (1991). In that essay, Jary linked Giddens' duality of structure with distinctive human transformation capacity in a "world view" where Jary launched an "episodic" transformation rather then evolutionary pattern, "given that individuals can always behave differently and act with an awareness of world-time."

Despite the above hypotheses that internal structure centres the events and structuration, the structure as a whole is deemed to be reproduced by mediate of their structured outcome earlier, "via the application of generative rules and resources, and in the context of unintended outcomes" (Giddens, 1979:66). For Giddens,

> "In structuration theory 'structure' is regarded as rules and resources recursively implicated in social reproduction; *institutionalized features of social systems have structural properties in the sense that relationships are stabilized across time and space*.
>
> "'Structure' can be conceptualized abstractly as two aspects of rules -- normative elements and codes of signification. Resources are also of two kinds: *authoritative resources,* which derive from the co-ordination of the activity of human agents, and *allocative resources*, which stem from control of material products or of aspects of the material world." (Giddens, 1984: xxxi, Italic added)

It follows that Giddens' dualist resource-rule structuration may be understood as Smelser's emphasis on "institution-structure". According to Smelser, such "institution-structure" is locating at "the heart and soul of our civil society — affect the character and effectiveness of the social integration of the larger society" (Smelser, 1997:48). For example, in a large-scale social transformation, institutions can be seen as structures at a general level of social organization, nevertheless a century after Cooley as, "a mature, specialized and comparatively rigid part of the social structure" (Cooley, 1909: 319).

In this sense, the hermeneutic of Giddens' structuration process—the hermeneutic is stressed by Giddens himself too—may reach to the point that among the interdependence of institution and structure, there exists a Luhmannian interpenetration between system and life world from which the non-institutional contentious politics stems. And more importantly, it occurs in a twofold way during the structural formation, "internally and externally" (Luhmann, [1984] 1995:213). In this instance, Luhmann's distinction between internal differentiation and external differentiation arrives

at a point of conjunction with Giddens' "quadripartite nature of structuration"[15] – which is comprised of internal structures/agents' practices/external structures/outcomes (events). (Stones, 2005: 85)

The penetration means, "a system makes its own complexity *available for constructing another system*" (ibid, Italic added), and "presupposes the capacity for connecting different kinds of autopoiesis – organic life, consciousness, and communication" (Luhmann, [1984] 1995:219). The structural formation then suggests an interpenetration along the boundaries between internal structure and external structure, between institution and structure, as well as the analogous division between system and life world implied, namely what Habermas ([1984] 1988) re-introduced. It is among the latest in the long series of binary oppositions used to characterize modern social life: *gemeinschaft* and *gesellschaft*, mechanical and organic, folk and urban, status and contract, traditional and modern (Calhoun, 1991:97).

More precisely, the structural transformation I have primary concern with is triggered by societal differentiation, that is, the interpenetration occurring at three levels: the external differentiation of the organizational system, the transition of functional differentiation, and the internal differentiation (Luhmann, [1984] 1995:192-93). From this triggering structure of "new functionalist" or "structurationist", I further the structural transformation into an operative framework of structuration process.

2.3 Categories in Social System Transformation

According to Warren Schmaus' (2004) *Rethinking Durkheim and His Tradition*, the conception of categories imposed a profound impact on twentieth century thought, and can be rooted to Emile Durkheim and Marcel Mauss. In the paper entitled "On Some Primitive Forms of Classification"

[15] In his 2003 essay, John Mingers holds that "Synthesising Giddens' and Luhmann's theoretical systems… seem to be potentially complementary." And, "there is clearly a form of closure between the social structure in general and the social activity through which it is (re)produced."

(Durkheim and Mauss, 1903) and the book *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* (Durkheim, 1912), they proposed the most basic categories of thought, including space, time, class and causality, as social in character. Through which, "people construct culturally specific perceptual realities through the use of culturally variable sets of categories", in particular, the system of social organization also serves as the origin and prototype of the concept of categories (classifying). (Schmaus, 2004: 1,3)

My cerntral concern in this research is not to explore the social psychological meaning of those new social categories (with a baseline of depersonalized individual-group relationships). Rather, this research focuses on the institution-structure implications of the twin concepts that categories involve: boundaries and categorization, i.e. the implication of the opportunity structure for NSO system. Two-step discussion is required as follows: categories as symbolic and social boundaries, and categorization as a political mechanism.

2.3.1 Categories as Symbolic and Social Boundaries

Unlike the situation in the early 1980s, when in Luhmann's view the "theoretical treatment of the concept of boundaries are rare and mostly without much effect" (Luhmann, [1984] 1995: 503, note 41), in recent years "the idea of 'boundaries' has come to play a key role in important new lines of scholarship across the social sciences… Boundaries have always been a central concern in studies of urban and national communities." (Lamont and Molnar, 2002:167)

In light of Luhmann, boundary determination, "next to systems", is the most important requirement of system differentiation, for "the formation of boundaries interrupts the continuity of processes that connect the system with its environment" (Luhmann, [1984] 1995:29-30). Boundaries and system differentiation, the two central concepts within Luhmann's social system theory, hereby offer the "new functionalist" account for categories and categorization respectively.

2.3.1.1 Symbolic Boundaries

Among increasing literatures which are concerned with symbolic boundaries in discussion about symbolic systems and indirect forms of power since the 1960s, the symbolic boundaries are defined by Lamont to be the "conceptual distinctions made by social actors to categorize objects, people, practices, and even time and space. They are tools by which individuals and groups struggle over and come to agree upon definitions of reality." (Lamont, 2001)

The categorical boundaries or symbolic boundaries centre the identity politics or symbolic politics that builds upon the base of the constructivist premise and "self reflects society", thus congregate strangers into certain group via shared symbolic cognition and then divide society into various social groups.

In this context, categories can be understood as specific boundaries that are conceptualized to be perceptual and cognitive to social actors. In distinguishing with social boundaries, institutionalized or objectified in the complex society, correspondingly, one can categorize categories into "symbolic boundaries" vis-à-vis the "social boundaries". Nevertheless, far beyond categories' sociological sense, the symbolic boundaries may be observed broadly in cultural and social life, as the long tradition concerned from Weber to Veblen to Alias to Mary Douglas that makes sense (Lamont, 2001). They are relating to various symbolic resources which Giddens' structuration processes (e.g. conceptual distinctions, interpretive schemes, cultural and political traditions, etc) are involved in to create, maintain, contest, or even dissolve institutionalized social differences (e.g. class, gender, race, equality, etc) (Lamont and Molnar, 2002:168).

In Chinese society, it is no wonder, analogous social categories exist but most of which are coined with the mainstream ideology and echoing conventional embedded identity, such as the "work units", peasant/non-peasant residents, indigenous residents/remote residents, cadre/mass, party (CCP)-member and non-party member, ethnic Hans/minorities, etc. However, some new categories have emerged in the past decade indicating new social identity, like the "peasant worker

(*min gong*)", the "social vulnerable groups (*shehui nuoshi qunti*)", the "Netizens (*wang min*)", and the "citizen" —a new "detached identity" in Tilly's sense (2004).

2.3.1.2 Social Boundaries

Social boundaries are objectified forms of social differentiation. Nevertheless, it is not necessary to take it for granted that social boundaries are "manifested in unequal access to and unequal distribution of resources", as Lamont and Molnar hold, although the social structures in the real world are often hierarchic and the reproduction of durable inequality relies on social boundaries (Tilly, 1998). Rather, they involve various forms of social organizations and institutions, such as communities, citizenship, status, territorial difference, social deviance, the distinction between political domain and economic domain, etc.

In short, the social organization per se exists "ultimately to make boundaries" (Harrison White, 1992:128), as new-institutionalist economists are concerned with the central thesis about the nature and boundaries of the corporation since Coase (1937). If a social structure of a system is assumed, social boundaries can be simplified to the articulation "separating internal interdependencies from system/environment interdependencies and relating both to each other. Boundaries are thus an evolutionary achievement par excellence" (Luhmann, [1984] 1995: 29).

Specifically, with the benchmark of the new institutionalism in political science which has risen over two decades (see Rothstein, 1996; Hall and Taylor, 1996), social boundaries can be grouped into three categories: coercive, normative and relational. They represent specific social institutions (also social organization) in turn—regulative, normative and cognitive (Scott, 1995) in favour of "depicting institutions as the results of intentional actions or adaptive solutions to conflicting interests." (DiMaggio, 1991a)

- Generally speaking, the regulative institutions (i.e. administration and surveillance structure) rely on "external coercive fact" upon individuals (Berger and Luckmann, 1967), and thus the

regulative boundaries are subject to the effectiveness of institutional maintenance. On the other hand, the boundaries of coercive force imposed on individuals can be measured via the status quo of citizenship and then the extent of societal autonomy, namely the institutional border between the state and society.

- Normative institutions take effect via ethical rules, like ideology, values and moral norms, custom and tradition, belief and religion. All these cultural mechanisms involve specific legitimating functions of social institutions and pertains to the "correctness" of the individual's identity cognition (Berger and Luckmann, 1967:118). The "correctness" of social norms represents the normative boundaries in social life.[16] To sustain the "correctness", both social sanction and consensus are required, as Chong argues there must be "widespread agreement that a general consensus exists around them and social sanctions for failure to comply with them" (Chong, 2000:5). However, Chong's empirical studies of symbolic politics confirm, when confronted with new norms and values, people tend to "change their attitudes in response to changes in social relations and institutions" (ibid:190).

- Relational boundaries exist in cooperative institutions, such as clan, club, association, voluntary organization, neighborhood community and corporation-like commercial organizations. The boundaries of these cooperative institutions and social organizations are "predicted on the presence (and perception) of common patterns of durable ties" (Gould, 1995: 19), including both Cooley's (1909) face-to-face ties in the "primary groups" and indirect relationships (Calhoun, 1991). In Scott's (1995) new-institutionalism view, these network-driven institutions are indeed cognitive institutions deploying cultural forms and collective consciousness in the absence of normative constraints. The network boundaries rely not only on inter-personal ties but also on "actors' identities, belongs, definitions of reality and shared meanings" (Rothstein, 1996:147). The latter constructs the symbolic boundaries of community. (Cohen, 1985)

[16] Just on the basis of group identity boundaries, Mary Douglas characterized the life world into four types: the individualism society, egalitarianism society, hierarchy society, or a fatalism society. Cf. Mary Douglas (1982).

2.3.2 Categories as Political Mechanism

From categories to categorization, Lamont and Molnar (2002) formulate three approaches to explore the relation between symbolic boundaries and social boundaries: (1) the interplay of symbolic and social boundaries; (2) the mechanisms associated with the activation, maintenance, transposition or the dispute, bridging, crossing and dissolution of boundaries; (3) the cultural membership, i.e. the social psychological self-categorization with a focus on stereotyping, depersonalization and group polarization as Turner et al. (1987) proposed.

From the perspective of the production of social boundaries (so-called social inequality), Tilly (1998, 2001) systematizes the mechanisms involved in the formation, transformation, activation, and suppression of social boundaries, and then categorizes boundary mechanisms into three: environmental, cognitive and relational mechanisms, corresponding to Scott's (1995) threefold categorization of institutions (boundaries).

Extendedly, Tilly distinguished two sets of mechanisms in his "Social Boundary Mechanisms": (1) those that precipitate boundary change and (2) those that constitute boundary change. Precipitants of boundary change include here: encounter, imposition, borrowing, conversation, and incentive shift; and constitutive mechanisms include inscription–erasure, activation–deactivation, site transfer and relocation (Tilly, 2004a).

The rise of black civil rights movements in the 1950's in the "Deep South", for instance, in McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly's framing of movement tactics and political opportunity, was ascribed to some dramatic instances of white racism which highlighted "disruptive actions of newsworthy" in relevance with social order and social control based on the category of black/white. Without them, King and his companions "lost the ability to attract media, and, in turn, to mobilize the kind of public pressure productive to federal action" (McAdam, McCarthy and Zald, 1996:345, 353,354). In this sense, Charles Tilly labels them as a category-produced-opportunity-structure, for "their boundaries do crucial organizational work" in social mobilization (Tilly, 1998:6).

In this case, the opportunity structure of a certain boundary helps to mobilize and transform episodic events into a social movement, in accordance with Smelser's hypothesis about "social differentiation" and "structural differentiation as the response to political conflict" (Smelser 1997:46, 56). That is as follows:

> differentiation → categorization → social group → consciousness of group → political mobilization → social change
>
> (Smelser, 1997: 57)

In Luhmann's view, boundary change is conducted through the boundary's duality, as a place of separation and connection within social systems, and then boundaries can be differentiated as specific mechanism with the specific purpose of separating yet connecting" (Luhmann, [1984] 1995: 29). The constitutive boundary change helps to reduce both the external and internal complexity of a system. More importantly, a system's internal organization with the help of boundary mechanism henceforth leads to systems's being indeterminable for one another and the emergence of new systems (Luhmann, [1984] 1995: 29).

At this moment, being the carrier of interpenetration between internal and external structures, the boundary change per se as the "changes in the form of societal differentiation" appear to be the "triggering factor" (ibid: 240), as the beginning point of Smelser's route above shows. In which the difference between meaning-constituted symbolic boundaries and social boundaries constructs the intermediate domain, i.e. the opportunity space for further structuration (Luhmann, [1984] 1995: 124)—for either new corporatism or NSOs' contentious politics. Such differentiation is proposed to lie at the centre of the category mechanism in overall structuration.

The symbolic boundaries, such as the claim "asserting rights", function like normative "modalities" in influencing people's expectations. The social boundaries, such as social class and separation between power elites and grassroots, reflect the social cognition or categorization of society and community per se. The interpenetration between internal and external structures

conducted by social self-organization is believed to generate or precipitate the difference between social expectation and social cognition and thus to form an intermediate and autopoietic domain.

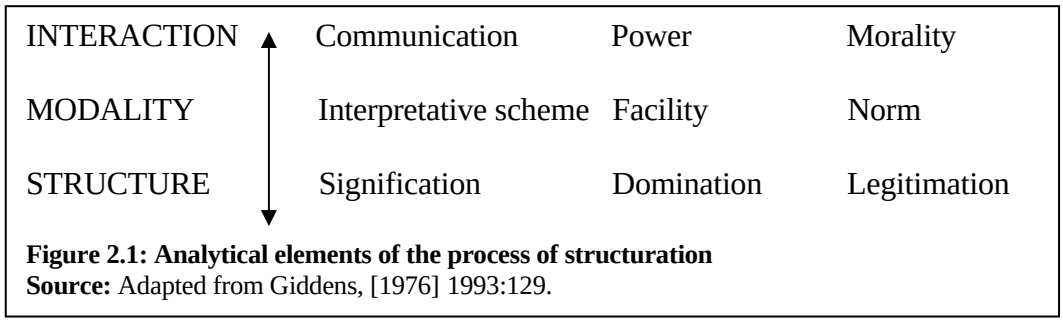

Figure 2.1: Analytical elements of the process of structuration
Source: Adapted from Giddens, [1976] 1993:129.

From this core mechanism to the overall structuration process, two steps are required: to identify the form of boundaries (i.e. modalities of social action) and then the pattern of boundary change (i.e. societal differentiation) over time (see Figure 2.1).[17] The term modality here means "*the necessary, contingent, possible, or impossible modes, manners, or ways of being and acting"* (Kontopoulos, 1993: 272, Italic original). It can be traced to Habermas and Giddens. Based on his fundamental distinction between work and interaction, Habermas defined four modalities of social action: (a) instrumental, (b) strategic, (c) communicative, and (d) symbolic actions. For Giddens, the "interpretative scheme", "facility" and "norms" are of modalities mediating interaction and structure in processes of social reproduction (Giddens, [1976] 1993: 129).

As regards China's NSOs' structuration, I identify three specific forms (modalities) along three-level boundaries of regulative, cognitive and relational in turn: the (new) social movements, categories, and social networks of NSOs, which correspond specific boundary mechanisms.

Dynamically, the boundary changes may lead to the legitimation of NSOs, self-categorization of NSO agents and politicization movements, where the boundary mechanisms constitute a three-level framework of structuration of NSOs.

[17] Adapted from Giddens, the Figure 2.1 shows three-level structuration processes. In which, "structures of signification can be analysed as system of sematic rules; those of domination as system of resources; those of legitimation as system of moral rules." (Giddens, [1976] 1993: 130) The domination and power represent the facilities and resources "that may be brought to a situation of interaction…" (Giddens, 1977: 133,134; recited by Bryant and Jary, 1991:10) Power, here, is defined as "transformative capacity"(ibid).

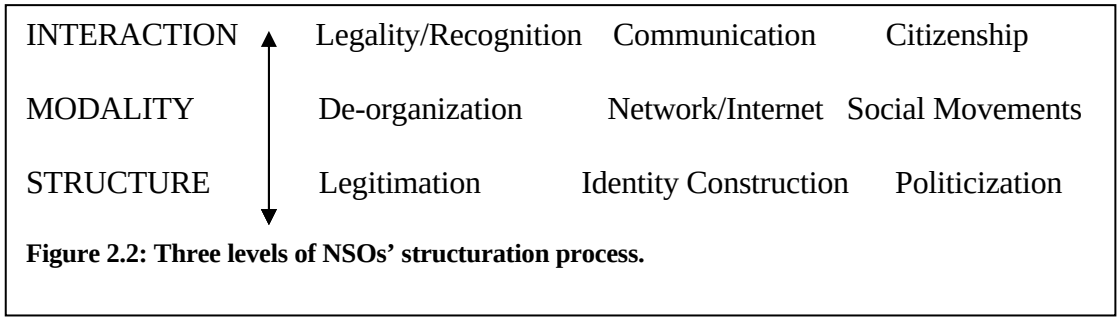

Figure 2.2: Three levels of NSOs' structuration process.

In the above diagram (Figure 2.2), I replace the interaction around power by the contesting citizenship, which has become the focus of the social-political life in recent years in urban China. Citizenship historically contains three aspects: citizen rights, political rights and social rights, as T.H. Marshall's ([1949] 1964) remarkably formulated. However, under certain conditions, the civil rights may become a politicized issue and then influence the agenda-setting of social movements. Since the late 1990s onward, citizenship in China was observed that the spill-over of citizenship consciousness supported the formation of "asserting rights" movement and "asserting rights organizations".

Then, from this starting point, one can outline three new modalities (patterns) of structuration: de-organization, networking and social movement. They correspond to the boundary mechanisms functioning along Scott's (1995) threefold boundaries—regulative, relational and normative—existing in the authoritarian regime; then represent or reproduce three-level structures during the transformation process: the legitimation of NSOs, (social) construction of NSO agents (namely the self-categorization), and politicization movement of NSOs (see Figure 2.2).

Over time, these cognisable modalities per se contain or generate specific boundary mechanisms in the form of so-called category politics during deep structuration. For instance, 1) the deorganization actually indicates a structural change of NSOs from state-oriented legality to society-oriented legitimation; 2) The citizenship as a new normative boundary forged by NSOs eventually reverses the depoliticization of NSOs and then fills the gap between the masses and the authoritarian regime…afterwards it creates a new political space for a new contentious politics in pursuit of "asserting rights" for the masses; 3) The spread of Internet communication and Internet

networks also profoundly reshapes the basic morphology of NSO's social networks and social movements.

These aspects of observable development urge us to explore and represent the process how categories function in NSOs' structuring and contentions.

2.4 Social Movements and Social Networks

During the depoliticized decade after 1989, there were very few social movements and social movement organizations (SMOs) appearing in the research agenda of scholars who were concerned with China's social change or the probable formation of civil society in China.[18] However, the recent development of NSO-associated structuration since the end of 1990s onward, where citizenship as a new normative modality — also as a "detached identity" vis-à-vis the conventional "embedded identity" in Tilly's terms (Tilly, 2004b: 59-65) — raises profound changes of social boundaries, seems to have politicized the social actions of NSOs.

Such boundary change and politicization over time may just reflect the dynamic move of NSOs. When types of resistance and contention events surged in recent years in the cities of China as a response to increasing social conflicts, it is indeed necessary to explore whether, and to what extent, and in which ways NSOs probably involve the "rightful resistance" in O'Brien's (1996) sense (the nationwide self-organized collective actions of protests and riots against corruption and police violence, etc), or "asserting rights" movements, as many NSO activists reported.

Extendedly, social movements are subject to the internal structuration and external structuration of social movement organizations (SMOs) (Kriesi, 1996:155). The former refers to the networking (and identity-building) process; and the latter, also the outcome of structuration, is reflected on the contentious politics, namely the social movements occurring in the overlapping

[18] Most of related studies concentrated on democratic movements and student movements in and before 1989. Among those "new social movements" which rose after 1989, only very limited cases were noted, for example, the consumer rights movement, the mobilization actions of Chinese Democratic Party, and Falun Gong's contentious actions.

area of political society and civil society spheres in opposition to the corporative corporatism politics (see Figure 2.2). This section then addresses two modalities of NSOs' structuration: social movements and social network.

2.4.1 Social Movements and Contentious Politics

Since Zald and Ash (1966) first identified social movement organizations as the carrier of social movements, the development of SMO studies has mainly been along the dimension of organization-environment, or ecological analysis; and the mainstream social movement approach namely the resource mobilization theory (RMT) formed in the 1970s, also "borrowed heavily from organizational theory" (Zald, 1992:336). Nevertheless, the role of the movement entrepreneur in mobilizing was underlined since the very beginning (e..g. McCarthy and Zald, 1973). Two variants of RMT, political opportunity theory (e.g. McAdam, 1982; Tarrow, 1989, 1995; Kriesi, Koopmans, Duyvendak and Giugni, 1992) and political process theory (Taylor, 1978) advanced research in organizational development in certain political contexts (e.g. Kriesi, 1996).

For example, the rationalist Chong (1999, 2000) took social movements as an arena of symbolic politics assembling collective actions and institutional conflicts, which "motivate persons to form groups in a way not explainable by Olson" (McFarland, 2004:10). Social movements in the rationalist perspective may reflect the changing preference (norms) of actors in a transformational society.

In this sense, beyond the theory of resource dependence on which Lin's institutionalising field rested, the social transformation derived from changing or creating social norms motivated may be understood as a "category-produced-opportunity-structure" of social movements proposed by Charles Tilly, for "their boundaries do crucial organizational work" in social mobilization (Tilly, 1998: 6), as the rise of 1950s black civil movements represented so well. What these social boundaries in the "Deep South" make sense to us is not confined to "escaping from the iron cage"

in Weber's terms, but instead, inducing change of the political opportunity structure of transformation.

However, unlike the RMT approach, which mainly reflects the American experience in 1960s that "both RMT and 'political process' approach analyse the 'how' rather than the 'why' of social movements" (Melucci, 1989; recited from Diani, [1992] 2000: 158), the New Social Movement (NSM) approach in Europe, "tries to relate social movements to large-scale structural and cultural changes (Diani, [1992] 2000: 159).

Specifically, in contrast to McAdam, McCarthy and Zald's (1988) emphasis on the explicit boundary of SMO in the context of the "movement industry", especially those professional social movement organization (PSMO), Mario Diani focuses on the inter-organizational and inter-personal linkages, such as identity and network contacts. Snow, Zurcher and Elkand-Olson's (1980) seminal essay offered a concrete case, in which social movements and social movement organizations were recruited via social networks.

For Diani and the NSM school, both social movement and SMOs are embedded in networks instead of easily-defined PSMO with clear characteristics like full time-deployed leadership, paper membership, strong intention to influence policy and so on (McAdam, McCarthy and Zald, 1988: 717), although "identifying the boundaries of the network is one of the most difficult problems for any social movement analyst" (Diani, 2002a: 176). The recent development of anti-globalization movements where the nature and characteristics of network were highlighted by global movement networks and Internet discourse pushed the shift of social movement research to network theory (e.g. Kavada, 2003). In these social network analysis of social movements and SMOs (see Diani 2002a; Diani and McDoug, 2003), "[T]he boundaries of a social movement network are defined by the specific collective identity shared by actors involved in the interaction." (Diani, [1992]2000: 162)

Given the implicit boundaries of China's social movements, such a network/identity boundary approach seems appropriate in analyzing the non-institutional contentious politics, where

NSOs are, therefore, supposed to involve two layers: internal structuration and external structuration. The former refers to the networking process, in levels of both inter-organizational and intra-organizational. The latter includes three dimensions: the SMO's relationship with its members, its allies, and the authority (Kriesi, 1996: 155).

Along these boundaries, there are at least six constitutive elements of social movement to be identified in the remaining studies: SMOs, purpose, actions/events, networks, actors/agents and identity.

Firstly, Hanspeter Kriesi (1996) formulates a twofold criteria of SMOs to distinguish them from other types of social movement-related organizations, like supportive organizations, movement associations, parties and interest groups: "(1) they mobilize the constituency for collective actions, and (2) they do so with a political goal to obtain some collective goods from authorities." (Kriesi, 1996: 152)

Secondly, as the classification of NSOs in the below to show, almost all kinds of NSOs share common attributes during their claim-making after 1998, that is what the slogan of "asserting rights" (维权) reflects. Rights, involving all concrete aspects of the citizenship from civil rights to political rights and social rights, are above all, an assertion against the regulative institutions. The "asserting rights organizations" can thus be used to categorize various NSOs and differentiate them from SOs after 1998 — a turning point in the history of NSOs, when the "rights consciousness" as the replacement of "democracy" crept into China's society.

Thirdly, as outside observers, I find, an event namely the "tortured death of Sun Zhigang" and following protests changed the year of 2003 into another turning point since that time the claim of "asserting rights" spilled over to almost all cases of contentious collective actions, and a large number of NSOs in China moved toward "asserting rights movements". A new contentious social movement began to form after 2003. However, we need to know how many events

constitute the episodic process, how these episodes impose structural impacts on the formation and then transformation of social movements.

Fourthly, as a cognitive framework in Meluccian terms, the claim of "asserting rights" involved here offers both cognitive and normative expectations and legitimacy, also innovative political opportunity for NSOs and movements. Both the NSOs-associated "urban movements" and the badly-organized and dispersed street protests can thus be framed or internalised into the common framing of "asserting rights".

Fifthly, one can see a new group (or generation) of "movement intellectuals" cultivated from and consisting of those NSO activists, NSO entrepreneurs, and "opinion leaders". In addition to the consensus of "asserting rights", what their shared common identity and social bonds are pinned on remains unclear.

And last, but perhaps most important, the way in which the structural resources of NSOs facilitate movement mobilization, or vice versa, may be centred in the social network perspective (i.e. new social movement approach). It is relating to the network evolution in levels of inter-actors and inter-organizations over time.

Nevertheless, all the above observations and questions of the profound rise of "asserting rights movements" and NSOs in the past decade require further exploration into the inner structuration of NSOs.

2.4.2 Social Network Construction of NSOs

The relational perspective of social structure can be rooted to Marx, Durkheim, Cooley, von Wiese and Brown (Breiger, 2004), and was highlighted again by Emirbayer's (1997) seminal essay entitled "Manifesto for a Relational Sociology". For them, the social network analysis is "best developed" approach to the exploration of social structure in opposition to the "substantialism" (Emirbayer, 1997: 282, 299).

Long before the approach of social network analysis (SNA) was embraced by organizational studies and social movement field, scholars had noted that Chinese society is organized through particular ties that formed dense webs of social networks, e.g. Fei Xiaotong (1945) described Chinese society as built on a "differential mode of association" (差序格局) resembling highly-homophilic core-periphery spider-like webs, cloned from clan communities (宗族) to secret societies to elite circles and bureaucratic hierarchy. In contemporary China, associated with almost all relation variables e.g. clans, relatives, acquaintances derived from work-unit, neighborhood, alumni, comrade-in-arms, and even strangers sharing common "friends of friends" or "acquaintances of acquaintances" and identity with the same village, town, city, province and "nationality", *Guanxi* (关系) functions an embedded identity assembling both "weak ties" and "strong ties" in connecting segmented web-communities at both horizontal and vertical levels.

In recent decades, the mainstream of *Guanxi*-related social network analysis began to discard the notion of taking *Guanxi* to be a special cultural phenomenon in China since Fei Xiaotong—for instance, Hwang (1987) viewed it as "a national character" of Chinese society[19]—and turned to pay more attentions on the changing nature of *Guanxi* (see Gold et al., 2002). Following Grannovetter, Bian launched the "*Guanxi* capital" in the labour market or other societal aspects (Bian, 2001, 2002); Zhou and associates translated *Guanxi* in private economy to the "embeddedness and contractual relationships" (Zhou, Zhao, Li, Cai, 2003); Wank (2002) and Potter (2002) noticed *Guanxi*'s mediating function between the society and state were changing in the specific aspects. More significantly, the approach of social network analysis was introduced into *Guanxi* studies, such as Ruan's dissertation (1993) and further research on the social support networks in Tianjin and Shanghai (e.g. Ruan et al., 1997; Lai, 2001).

[19] Cf. K.K. Hwang's (1987) "relationalism" in his "Face and Favor：the Chinese power game"; and Mayfair Mei-Hui Yang's (1994) "gift economy" in his *Gifts, Favors, and Banquets: The Art of Social Relationships in China*.

Correspondingly, the approach of SNA proposed in this study is not confined to the concept of *Guanxi*, but rather, attempts to explore somewhat novel social connections derived from NSOs, structurally distinguished from *Guanxi-based* society. Through which, one can not only differentiate them from the officially defined "social associations" in urban China, but also go beyond the theoretical chaos which currently conceives the *Guanxi*-based traditional societies as the indigenous resource of the emerging civil society.

Former opportunity structure constituted by concrete social boundaries in this view can be understood as the "network of relevant relationships" (Bourdieu, 1996: 6-7), proposing a three-level networking during the internal structuration.

The first, analogous to the "informal social ties" in the multiple mobilizing networks in the Paris Commune (1871) (Gould, 1991), is of the informal-member network, locating at the boundary of "system/environment". Given the constraints of current regulations, China's social associations are prohibited from recruiting new members beyond geographic borders of the registered cities. But the trend of de-organization, especially the development of internet-based networks goes far beyond this limitation and the limitation to those non-member-based social organizations. Though most of these informal members are loosely connected or as merely passive "subscribers" in Passy's (2003) sense that usually means almost an end of a circle of social movement (Friedman and McAdam, 1992), it is these informal social networks that prominently spanned the structural holes and improved the grassroots base of NSOs and thus demonstrated their potential in recent campaigns asserting rights in China.

The second networking occurs in the inter-organizational level. Two indicators underpin this observation: the emergence of some professional network organizations, such as the Beijing-based China Development Brief; and the collective actions of NSOs, for example, an inter-organizational network of Chinese ENGOs was revealed in a recent campaign against the Salween dam project in 2004/5.

The third level emerges from the networks of networks—the group of network entrepreneurs.[20] Analogous to Alba and Moore's (1983) "elite social circles" and Pappi's (1984) "Altneostadt" model, they range widely in NSO-related networks as the network entrepreneurs of local networks but inter-connect and converge to the network closure. During the interviews, the respondents could easily distinguish whom belonged to their circles or not, and whom were the "opinion leaders". Theoretically, this elite group of NSOs can be regarded as the network entrepreneurs.

The "network entrepreneurs" involved here, according to Ronald Burt, "are people who build interpersonal bridges across structural holes" (Burt, 2002). The term of "structural holes" here refers to the situation absent relations in a network (Brass, 1992:303), where network entrepreneurs tend to fulfil such absence and thus create structural innovation. In this sense, structural holes as opportunities — first developed by White (1970) and later formulated by Burt (2002)—are correlated heavily with network entrepreneurs. The network entrepreneurs *per se* may be deemed as a certain mechanism of the goal-oriented evolution of NSO/networks by "adding value" to interpersonal ties and inter-organizational ties (Burt, 2002). The networks of network entrepreneurs therefore contain a deep structure and explain the dynamics of the whole NSO sector.

For example, as Helmut Anheier (2003) illustrated, the "single members" of NSDAP (1925-1930) were deemed as the "necessary mediators of national socialism through organizational and cultural 'framing'", who established most of the chapters and shaped the very important early development of the further paths of the party.

In this context, it will not be surprising that the perspective of NSO network entrepreneurs is helpful in predicting future direction of China's NSOs. Also, it assists us in tracing network clues from existing literatures concerning Chinese democratic movements and civil society organizations.

[20] Here, introducing the concept of "entrepreneur" with benchmark of rational choice theory (RCT) does not mean we assume entrepreneurs are homogenous. Rather, "entrepreneurs" vary in personal trajectory and network trajectory, then deserve us for specific network evolution analysis.

2.5 Summary: framing structural politics of NSOs

Looking back, this chapter proposes a two-step model of structuration: First of all, the social construction of boundary interpenetrates both external and internal structures, which constitutes the category politics (mechanism) in the overall structuration. Second, correspondingly, NSOs' structuration may be properly framed into a three-level move of NSOs: legitimization, contention and networking as the Figure 2.3 shows.

In Stones' (2005) framing of "quadripartite nature of structuration", the internal structure and agent's practices jointly locate between the external structure and outcomes of structuration, highlighting the "agent-in-focus" in "position-practice relation". It is understood to be more important than agent-in-context, due to its centre position in linking with other agents and then more "conjuncturally-specific knowledge" in "interpretative schemes, power capacities, and normative expectations — three ontologically inter-related aspects of structures picked out by Giddens" (Stones, 2005: 91).

In the long run, such a "position-practice relation" tends to be habitualized toward what Giddens called "institutionalized structural properties" of *"stabilized relationships among agents/actors across time and space*"(Giddens 1984: xxxi, Italic added). Hence, through the structural properties of agent-in-focus one may explore the origin of institution-structure on the one hand because "structures capture the reversibility of time" according to the Luhmann's distinction between structure and process (Luhmann, [1984] 1995:44). It reminds us to turn back to the basic aspects of Giddens' structuration in the beginning on the other hand: agent-in-focus, and network growth.

In the case of the structuration of China's NSOs, the ideal type of agent-in-focus might represent those multi-stake activists, who are rich in organizing capacities, network connections (also *Guanxi*) and influence on public/movement opinion in practice. If applied in the network growth, they become the three-layer entrepreneurship: the claim-making of new social norms, networking and agitating actions.

In summary, the above findings can be illustrated as follows in Figure 2.3, where Nan Lin's model of institutionalizing organization is widened to the structuration processes with system (organizational) differentiation—i.e. the inter-interpenetration between internal and external structures where the category politics of identity building is to be transformed into the claim-making of contentious politics.

Specifically, "interpenetration", here, "presupposes the capacity for connecting different kinds of autopoiesis—organic life, consciousness and communication" (Luhmann, [1984] 1995:219), while structuration means an open system with fluidly constructed boundaries and activities, e.g. social networks and social movements which occurred along system boundaries, mirroring Luhmann's "system is action". In this instance, Luhmann's social theory arrives at a conjunction point with Giddens' structuration. [21]

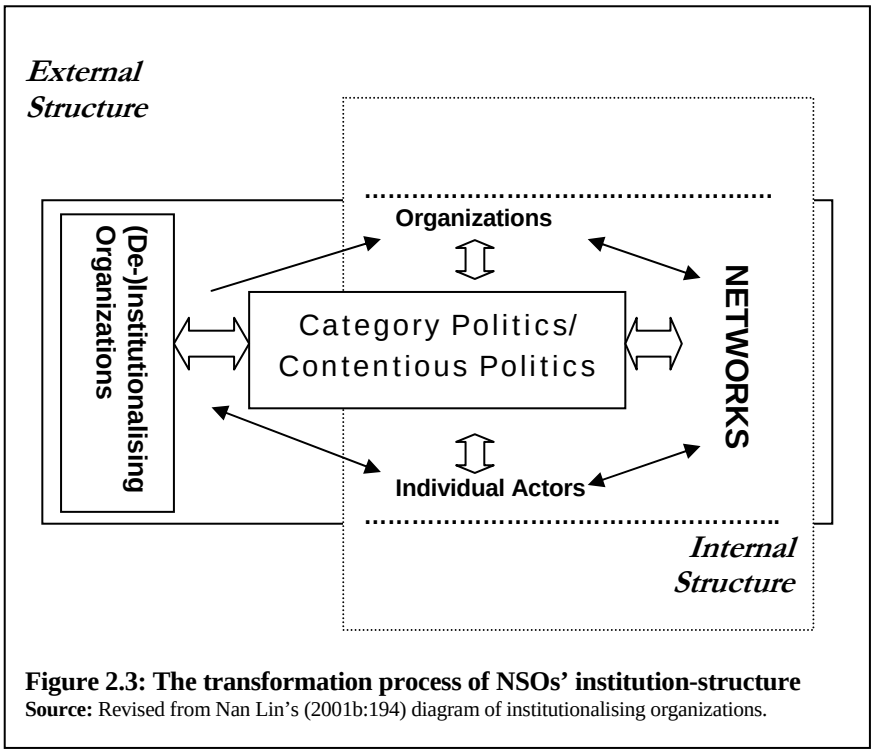

Figure 2.3: The transformation process of NSOs' institution-structure
Source: Revised from Nan Lin's (2001b:194) diagram of institutionalising organizations.

[21] Supra note 15. It should be noted, there is a basic difference between Giddens' proposed open system and Luhmann's closed system of society. As Sidney L Greenblatt (1981) put in the early studies about organizational behavior in Chinese society, "by focusing attentions on boundary relations between focal organizations and their environments and by attending to processes of feedback to and from organizations and the super systems of which they are a part, the open system would provide a more complex, dynamic, interactional approach to organizational behavior than that posed by the closed systems model." See also Hass and Drabek (1973).

In this dissertation, I adopt the open system postulate and assume that the lifeworld from which NSOs stem from is becoming an independent system to the exiting system of authoritarian regime.

Chapter 3

SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS IN TRANSFORMATION

Overview, status quo and puzzles

The purpose of this chapter is to describe and outline the transformation of so-called social organizations with the main focus on NSOs' twofold innovations (institutional and social), i.e. how and to what extent new social organizations were stemming from conventional social organizations.

3.1 From Social Organizations to New Social Organizations

3.1.1 Concept: social organizations in the Chinese context

At first glance, "the social organizations in China" might be a confusing concept among scholars. Back in Charles H. Cooley's seminal work *Social Organization: A Study of the Larger Mind*, the term of social organization was often used in a broad sense, referring to the government, court, parliament house, political party, church, trade union, associations, and so many collective entities—both institutional and organizational, both governmental and non-governmental. But in the Chinese context, the term social organization has its specific meaning and historical roots, referring to a specific social entity endorsed with a special legal personality according to current General Rules of Civil Law (1984), namely Social Group Legal Person (社团法人).

In general, the official catalogue of the social organization includes three sorts: the "social association and group" (社会团体), "Private Non-enterprise Unit" (PNEU,民办非企业单位), and "Foundation" (基金会). The "social associations and groups" as the main body of conventional SOs, comprise the "mass associations" like the Communist Youth League of China (CYLC) and the Women's Federation, and professional societies and industrial associations, which mainly undertake the missions of political mobilization and social control as CCP's assistants and

instruments. This point differentiates those conventional SOs from the "voluntary organizations" in the West. [22]

In a neighborhood with conventional SOs, the emergence of "new social organizations (NSOs)" may be viewed as one of the most profoundly social developments in 1990's China (Howell, 1995). Relative to the mainstream SOs, NSOs in this dissertation refer to those incremental, novel, spontaneous and volunteer civic organizations in urban China, close to the widely-accepted concept of civil society organizations.

There are predominantly five kinds of voluntary organizations that may fall in to the NSO category: environmental NGOs, civil rights organizations, e-forum-based associations, new intellectual associations and international NGOs, etc. It should be noted that, though these categories may overlap to some extent and they do highlight the distinctive characteristics of various NSOs and facilitate measuring and utilizing literature of Chinese NGOs.

3.1.2 The Rise and Fall of Social Organizations

Keeping Giddens' notion of structuration in mind that the structuration of institutions can be understood and how it comes about that social activities become "stretched" across wide spans of time-space (Giddens, 1984: xxi, 10), I logically view the differentiation between conventional social organizations and new social organizations as a continuous process. Our task in tracing such continuous processes from conventional social organizations to new social organizations is therefore to identify the "the symbolic or physical markers" of the time-space boundaries overtime.

3.1.2.1 The Status Quo of Social Organizations

[22] Nong Hui (Farmer Association) did not exist at all after the country Commune was established since 1958, although this kind of association in the country area were once one of the most important corner-stone of CCP during her liberation and the early years of the people's republic.

Among the main body of SOs, the social associations mainly consist of officially recognized intellectual societies, industrial associations, allied associations, sports associations, and others, according to Wang Ming et al. (2004) (see Figure 3.1). The new category of PNEU was defined in recent years, categorizing a great number of existing small-scale informal institutions for community-based service into SOs (see Figure 3.2). It should be stressed that, some important social organizations in Chinese social life are not subject to the Regulation or MCA's day-to-day management or control: 8 "democratic parties" (民主党派) as small partners of CCP, 8 "people's groups" (人民团体) as CCP's peripheral organizations (All-China Federation of Industry & Commerce, All-China Federation of Trade Union, All-China Women's Federation, Communist Youth League, etc.), various religious organizations or churches,[23] 25 privileged "social associations" without due responsibility of registration (China's Writer's Association, China's Disabled Association, China's Red Cross Association, etc).

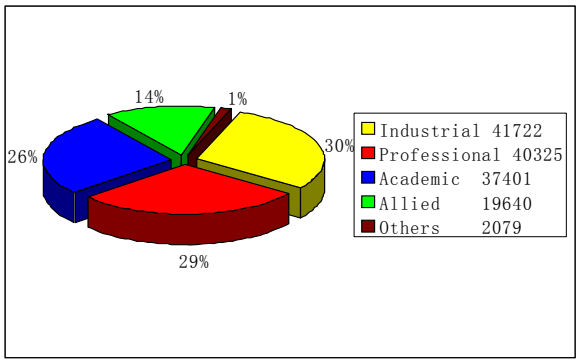

Figure 3.1: The Structure of SA
Source: MCA (2004), online document, http://www.mca.gov.cn/redian/mjzuzhih2.html

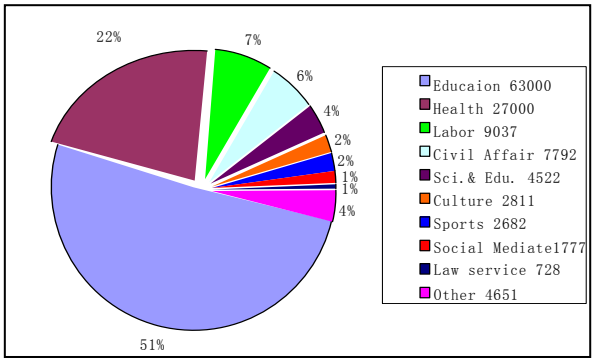

Figure 3.2 : The Structure of PNEU
Source: Ibid.

According to the Regulations (Regulations for Registration and Management of Social Organizations, 1998), SOs are also sorted into "national SOs" and "local level SOs" in accordance with the division of responsibility between Chinese central government and local governments. In practice, the distribution of SOs appears to be a pyramid structure along the hierarchic line of the registering agencies of SOs: By the end of 2003, there were 1,736 national-level SOs, 21,030

[23] After new Regulations of Religious Affairs enacted on March 1st 2005, the registration of all religious organizations are subject to RRMSO, and current religious affair agencies only bear administrative management. This latest change is discussed in Chapter 7.

provincial-level SOs, 48,731 city-level SOs, and 70,624 county-level SOs. [24] This division corresponds to the four-level hierarchical structure of China's government.

The PNEUs, are mainly community-based small-scale civic-run non-profit "Units", offering community social services. By 2004, the number of registered PNEUs increased from 124,491 in 2003 to 135 thousand,[25] far less than estimated 700,000 in 2000 (Shi, 2000: 30; Wang and He, 2004:26). Even these registered PNEUs as MCA noted, quite a proportion were not qualified—they were pursuing profit (!) and lacking accountable accounting system.[26]

The third officially defined category of "civic organizations" refers to foundations. Due to their property-based legal nature instead of member-based associations, they as a whole are excluded from the scope of this research. Nevertheless, the CYDF is an exception, whose financial scandal has reference to the rise of educational NSO.

In general, public foundations are under extremely strict control from the beginning on.[27] From 1981, when the first public foundation (Chinese Children Foundation) came into fruition, through to 1988 when the first Foundation Regulation was enacted, there were only five foundations in China. By 1998, the number of registered foundations increased to 1,801, within which 95% were so-called "local foundations".

However, the revision of Foundation Regulations in 1998 marked a turning point during the development of foundations. After that, the Ministry of Civil Affairs principally took over the administrative responsibility of foundations from the Central Bank and began to freeze any

[24] By 2004, the total number of SOs increased 7.7% to 153,000, with distribution at national level equalling1673, at provincial level 20563 and city and county level equalled 50424. Available at: http://www.chinanpo.gov.cn/web/showBulltetin.do?id=19297&dictionid=1908)

[25] Ibid. Those public non-profit organizations and private for-profit counterparts were counted in Shi's (2000) report.

[26] Ibid.

[27] After the new "Regulations for Management of Foundation (2004)" was enacted, the due capitals required was 2 million Yuan for private, 4 million for local public, and 8 million for national public foundations to be formed. From 1998 to 2004, though the Regulations (1998, 1988) did not regulate the exact due capitals, the MCA did not approve the establishment of any new foundations in fact. Before that, the central bank, as the gatekeeper, also executed an extremely strict policy in approving foundations.

approval for new foundations (Shi, 2000: 30). By 2002 the legal foundations decreased to 1,268 and to 936 in 2004. Of these, only 84 foundations were registered and recognized by MCA as public-benefit foundations.[28] In rural areas, the private foundations faced a more restrictive policy launched by the central government to "recover the financial order" in July 1998. Over 20,000 unregistered rural private foundations (rural credit cooperatives) were forcefully dissolved under this ban.[29]

3.1.2.2 The Rise and Fall of Social Organizations: from 1980s to 2005

Still focusing on growth charts of SAs and PNEUs, there are two turning points in last two decades (see Figure 3.3): two "political events" and subsequent policy change occurring in 1989 and 1998.

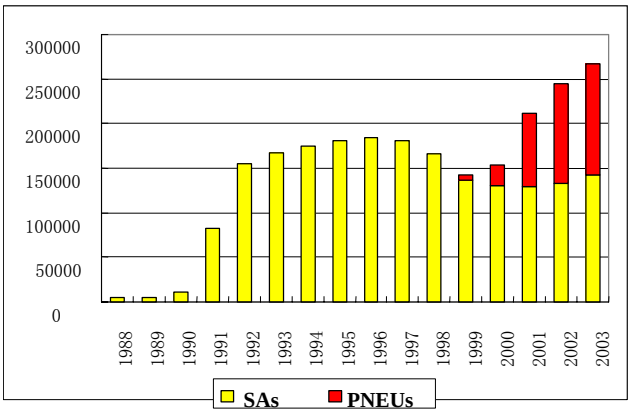

Figure 3.3: Official statistics of registered SAs and PNEUs (1988-2003)
Source: Ibid

In 1989, the crackdown over democratic movement on June 4th led to the birth of the "Regulations for Registration and Management of Social Organisations" (RRMSO) in late 1989. Under new regulations actually against those unregistered "inner associations" of "Units" that had played a crucial role in the 1989's democratic movement, all social associations should register with Civil Affair Agencies.

In 1999, after about ten thousands of Falun Gong (a *Qigong* society) members peacefully demonstrated around Zhongnanhai (the compound in central Beijing, housing the State Council and CCP leaders and their families) on April 25, the Party launched a nationwide crackdown over Falun Gong from July onwards. As a part of this crackdown campaign, the NPC

[28] Cf. China News Agency, March 19, 2004: Li Bengong, the director of Civic Organization Bureau of MCA, addressing at State Council press conference on March 19, 2004.

[29] According to the Decree No.247 of the State Council of China on July 13, 1998, all rural private foundations were deemed as "illegal financial institutions" and harmful to so-called "financial order".

revised the Regulation to tighten the control of SOs (Tong, 2002). Subsequently, two political associations "China Democracy Party" (see Wright, 2002) and the "China Development Union" were suppressed in 1999.[30]

Marked by these two turning points, the rise and fall of SOs over the last two decades may be phased into three stages: (see Figure 3.3)

1978-1989: The "social associations" emerged from reformist 1980s after the "Cultural Revolution", including some active professional societies of intellectuals. But numerous liberal saloons or various student autonomy associations which represented two basic organizational forms in 1980's pro-democracy movement were not counted in or registered as SAs at that time. This stage was ended by the first formal regulation of social associations (RRMSO) made in October 1989.

1989-1998: The introduction of market economy since 1992 assisted with the surge of spontaneously organized local civic associations and professional associations within the old institution of social organizations. For example, the *Qigong* (气功) associations emerged from everyday life in urban space (Chen 1995). In most cases, various officially sponsored associations of industry, or business, or academia were founded "top-down" by governmental agencies (Jia et al., 2004:103-06).

At almost the same time, an alternative development outside SA's system was made without drawing much attention to it during this stage. That is China's NGOs. They were not documented by official reports but could be traced to the facts: 1) Firstly, about a dozen of INGOs firstly entered China since 1991 (Hsia and White, 2000); 2) and secondly, a small number of self-defined NGOs were spontaneously organized by a group of liberal intellectuals or dissidents after the UN

[30] According to the report of Human Rights Watch (2000), "NIPPED IN THE BUD: The Suppression of the China Democracy Party", September 2000 12 (5) (available at: http://www.hrw.org/reports/2000/china/), the China Development Union (CDU) launched by Peng Ming, "had a party-like organization. During its 'First National Congress,' which was held in Beijing on October 4 and 5, 1998, Forty-five delegates representing 3,058 CDU members passed [the] 'Constitution of [the] China Development Union' [...] and elected the first leading organs."

Conference of Women NGOs held in Beijing in 1994, such as Friends of Nature (FON) and Global Village.

1999-2005: After Chinese government launched a nationwide crackdown over Falun Gong (FLG) since 20 July 1999, the NPC's lawmakers endorsed this action with an unusual decision to deal with FLG-like "evil cults" on 30 October 1999. In the subsequent years, 35,288 registered SOs were dissolved; then, by 2004, the scale of registered SOs remained roughly unchanged.[31] On the other hand, various "asserting rights organizations" emerged from the new social movements after 1998. In company with earlier NGOs, they began to reshape the landscape of social organizations.

The rapid expansion of social associations in the early 1990s raised an academic inquiry of whether it implied a structural transition toward real civil society organizations. For instance, Mok (2001) noticed some "cancer self-help groups" arose in Shanghai and elsewhere. One of the largest *Qigong* societies, Falun Gong, too spontaneously organized its nationwide networks during this stage (1992-1998). (Tong, 2002)

Jude Howell also noticed the difference between SOs and NGOs but mistakingly categorized over 181,000 organization registered with the Ministry of Civil Affairs by October 1993 into "the emerging NGO sector" in China (Howell, 1997:203). Nevertheless, "more spontaneous, voluntary and autonomous than the semi-official organizations are the popular organizations such as the Calligraphy Association, Qigong society, women's salons, and various literary societies … There are also a very few 'grassroots support organizations' " and "illegal or unrecognised organizations…which have not been permitted to register such as democracy and women's salons" (Howell, 1997: 206). Even those "semi-official social organizations … have the potential to become more autonomous structures, depending in part upon their success in raising their own funds" (ibid: 213).

[31] Supra note 11.

After 1999, the political environment became much more crucial for the structural transition of SOs. The MCA revised the Regulation (RRMSO) in 1999 and then issued a restrictive ban in April 2000, namely "Provisional Regulations of Banning Illegal Social Organizations", aiming to strengthen the "annual censoring system" and "dual management system" of social organizations (i.e. both the "host units" of SOs and civil affair agencies are responsible for the control of SOs). Subsequently, the MCA deregistered 35,288 SAs within a short time. By the end of 1999, the officially registered SOs decreased to 136,841; and 63 national SAs, including some nationwide *Qigong* societies, were deregistered by the authority in 2001 and then formally dissolved in June 2003. Only 128,856 SAs still remained by the end of 2001 (Shi, 2000:30).

3.1.3 The Rise of New Social Organizations: an overview

In a neighborhood with the rise and fall of social organizations, the emergence of "new social organizations (NSOs)" may be viewed as one of the most profound social developments in 1990's China (see also Howell, 1995). Relative to the mainstream of SOs, NSOs refer to those incremental, novel, spontaneous and volunteer civic organizations in urban China, close to the widely-accepted concept of civil society organizations.

There are mainly five kinds of new-rising urban organizations that may fall in to the NSO category: environmental NGOs, civil rights organizations, e-forum-based associations, new intellectual associations, and international NGOs. These NSOs share five common characteristics that differentiate NSOs from the conventional SOs: 1) voluntary; 2) autonomy; 3) non-official, 4) non-profit distributive and 5) pursuing public benefit. Theoretically, these distinctive aspects point to a new system of resource and rule that NSOs structurally rely on, through which NSOs could stem from the officially controlled SO sector and then become an independent sector.

3.1.3.1 Environmental NGOs

In current studies about Chinese NGOs, the majority of attention is focused on the ENGO sector — also one emphasis of this dissertation, which largely reflects the fact that ENGOs have been one of the prominent pioneers of NSOs since the mid-1990s. For example, as one of the earliest ENGO, Friends of Nature (Beijing, FON) was launched in early June, 1993, but failed in formal registration as an independent SO until the next year. [32]

However, as FON gradually became one of the most influential NGOs in China within 10 years, China's ENGOs as a whole experienced a rapid development in the second half of the 1990s. According to an investigation conducted in 2002 by Beijing-based China Development Brief, there were as many as 250 NGOs in China which could be counted as NGOs with the benchmark of Salamon's five-fold definition of NGO, within which the number of ENGOs was about one third (Young, 2001). Yang's (2005) research also verified that by 2002 the scale of ENGOs had increased to 73. In addition, there were a great number of student associations. Another independent investigation conducted by Lu Hongyan and "Green SOS" (Green Student Organization Society, a Chengdu-based NGO) in 2001 documented 184 active student environmental associations (SEAs) in Chinese universities. Most were "spontaneously" organized after 1998;[33] some of which, like Green-stone, have transformed from student association to independent ENGO in recent years.[34]

At the level of SO's politics, ENGOs' autonomous development seemed to eventually gain, to some extent, the political recognition. Developed to 2002, 18 Chinese NGO representatives from 12 ENGOs were presented at the Johannesburg Summit of Sustainable Development.[35] It was the first time in history that People's China permitted true NGOs to participate at such a large-scale

[32] See interview with Zhang Jilian, the director of FON office, on April 21, 2004. She mentioned the nervous political air in the early June, 1993.

[33] Lu's report documented that 89% of these student ENGO were "spontaneously" organized while only 7% were established by the Yorth League or other official agency. Available at: http://www.greensos.org/activity/view/main.htm#. See also Lu (2004)

[34] Cf. interview with Wang Yao, one of the three launchers of Green-stone, on April 14, 2004.

[35] In the last UNCED conference (1992), Chinese government only sent a small group. All representatives were from governmental agencies or "shi ye dan wei". This situation lasted till the World Women NGO Summit (UN) at Beijing in 1995.

official international conference. Later on, at least 26 local ENGOs and INGOs presented at the NGO forum during the 2nd GEF (Global Environment Foundation) assembly conference which was launched by the Chinese government in October 2002. Perhaps such co-representation cases induce outside observers to imagine the corporatism relationship between ENGOs and China's government.

3.1.3.2 Civil Rights Organizations (CROs)

The claim of "Asserting Rights" (*wei quan*) and Asserting Rights Organization can be traced to the consuming revolution from the early 1990s and the semi-official Consumer Rights Union which played a key role in the growth of consciousness of *Wei Quan* and consumer rights movement from that time (Hooper 2000).

Jackson, Chin and Huang (2004) also precisely categorize these asserting rights (*Wei Quan*) organizations into "Social-Justice Civil Society Organizations", thus highlight their role in Chinese society and imply the connection between them and probable civil rights movements. Four kinds of influential CROs may be identified as follows.

a) Special civil rights organizations, are organized by active intellectuals, lawyers, and other civil rights activists. In most cases, such organizations are titled as "institutes" or "centres", such as "Open Constitution Initiative" (OCI, Beijing), "Ai Zhi Xing (love-knowledge-action) Health and Education Institute" (AZX, Beijing), and "Legal Aids Centre for Environmental Torts" (Beijing). The first mentioned was launched by three young teachers — Xu Zhiyong, Tengbiao and Yu Jiang in October 2003 who were also "three jurist doctors" appealing for revoking the vagrancy regulation in 2003. AZX is one of the leading AIDS/HIV aid NGO in China, initiated by Wang Yanha in October 2002, who also pioneered research into the homosexuality and AIDS/HIV social work since the early 1990s. The last one was launched by experts of environment and tort

laws in China University of Political Science and Law since October 1998, functioning in practice as both the academic institute and voluntary CRO.

b) House-Owner Associations, emerged firstly in Shenzhen in 2001 and then spread over to Beijing, Shanghai and other cities.[36] Distinguished from official neighborhood organizations, these community-based associations were spontaneously organized by house-buyers, and concentrated in the newly-developed residential areas (communities) in those most flourishing cities. By 2006, the scale of house-owner associations in Beijing, had increased to about 400 in total, less than 10% of all residential communities.[37]

Profoundly, they not only differentiate themselves from the officially organized local neighborhood committee as a novel neighborhood-based autonomous organization, but also, have distinguishing multiplicity of activisms with the assertion of "private-property-rights-derived common rights" vis-à-vis other NSOs. As Huilongguan House-Owner Association and Furunjiayuan House-Owner Association (both in Beijing) show, they have tried almost all forms available of collective struggle against the collusion of developers and local governments, including sit-in-peace, march and collective litigation, etc. And, all investigated cases have: set up e-forums (online discussion groups) favouring inter-communication, utilized print media and television to gain social supports, and built connections with special CROs during their collective actions.[38]

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[36] See Zou Jiajian's Story "A Way of A Citizen's Rationally Asserting Rights", in *Nanfenchuang Magzine,* June 15, 2005, p.48-51. In the case of Zou and Jinzhou Building's, J.Dr. Sun Hailong of Beijing University offered legal aid for him and Jinzhou owners association during litigation. For Nie and Huilongguan owners association, J.Dr. Xu Zhiyong and his OCI provided support.

Regarding a recent case study in Shanghai, see Pan Tianshu (2005), "Owners' Associations in Neighbourhood Shanghai".

Relatively, those residents who were torted in the "demolition and eviction" associated with the ongoing large-scale "reconstruction" in many Chinese cities in the last few years, bound to the "problem of collective action", seemed unable to organize effective collective protests, although the "conflicting events" were increasingly reported by public media in China.

[37] Cf. *Beijing Youth Daily*, March 29,2006, A6.

[38] Among three samples I interviewed there are two who have very close connections with OCI, House-owner's Association of Huaqingjiayuan and House-owner's Association of Huilongguan residential areas in Beijing.

c) Labour rights organizations. The labour rights organizations emerged in parallel with the apathy of official trade union (ACFTU, founded in 1925 as a national official social organization and a partner of CCP) in the last decade when so-called "trouble workers" were "under assault" by the capital no matter whether they were employed by SOEs or private enterprises, or joint-venture enterprises (Chan, 2001; Chan and Cooper, 1997). The official trade unions in these labour rights disputes always behaved like a "third party" making the situation worse (Chen, 2004). The significant change of the official trade union in recent years, such as the dispute between ACFTU and Walmart, can only be observed after the rise of autonomous labour rights organizations. [39]

In the delta area of Pearl River (Guangdong province), over 10 labour rights organizations were actively asserting rights for workers in this highly industrialized and urbanized area.[40] The "Worker Document Service" at Panyu (a satellite town of Guangzhou city) founded by Zeng Feiyang[41] in August 1998 as a grassroots labour rights NGO, had, for instance, by 2002, offered legal services in over 400 labour disputes (usually about "work (employment) injuries"). Half of which were settled finally via administrative (labour) arbitration and local courts.

The Shenzhen-based Institute of Contemporary Observation (ICO) represents another kind of large-scale and professional labour rights NGO. It was launched by Dr. Liu Kaiming, a former editor, in March 2001, concentrating on promoting Social Accountability 8000 of International Standard Organization in the shoe processing industry in the delta area. By 2006 it became the largest professional NGO in China, having sufficient funds (mainly sponsored by Ford Foundation and Oxfam) and over 40 full-time employees and many more volunteers.

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[39] See the latest overview of this dispute between ACFTU and Walmart in *International Herald Tribune*, on October 12, 2006, "Unions triumphant at Wal-Mart in China", by David Lague; and an early news that ACFTU forced to unionize all foreign firms in China, by Xinhua News Agency on April 26, 2005, "Trade Unions Urged to Stick to Socialism".

[40] Yang, Yinbo (2004) "A Report on NGOs and Other Forms of Non-governmental Powers of Peasant Workers in Mainland China", in *China Labour Study*, No.1, Autumn, 2004, pp.28-31. Yang is a labour-rights activist, currently living in Sicuan province. *China Labour Study* is an electronic journal of Hong Kong-based labour rights NGO China Labour Watch.

[41] Zeng is a law worker and a former civil servant of a local justice bureau. Zeng launched this grassroot NGO in 1998. Cf. interview with Zeng Feiyang and Chen Hentao, May 21, 2004.

In this context, the autonomous local unions rose between 2003 and 2004. According to Yang and Hong Kong-based "China Labour Watch", there emerged at least several hundred "peasant-worker unions" in some provinces, especially in Heilongjiang (over 100), Qinghai (24), etc.

d) Women's rights organizations. In Saich's (2000) classification, women's rights organizations emerged in parallel to GONGOs (including official Women's Federation) and NGOs since the early 1990s with such forms as follows:

- Independent NGO-like women's aid organizations, such as the "MAPLE Women's Psychological Counselling Centre" (Beijing) noted by Heberer and Sausmikat (2004);
- Media-based organizations, like *Worker Sister* (Da Gong Mei) and *Rural Women Knowing All* (Nong Jia Nü). The latter, being a print media noted by Saich (2000), manages three funds helping young women workers who are in emergencies and young women in the countryside who lack education;
- Educational-institution-based organizations. These women's rights organizations are founded by a number of women (feminist) research and education institutions, e.g. Northwest University (Xi'an), Beijing University (Beijing), Renmin University (Beijing), China University of Political Science and Law (Beijing), etc.[42]

It should be stressed, that all these women's rights organizations have been recognized by the authorities and have cooperation with the official Women's Federation in varying degrees. In fact, since the national women congress in December 2004 at Guangzhou, All-China Women's Federation sought to recall the "Law to Protect Women Rights (1992)" and then consolidate all the above influential civil organizations with the shared claim of asserting women's rights.

[42] *China Women Newspaper*, May, 9, 2002.

3.1.3.3 E-forum-based Associations

While the online discussion groups (e-forums) in China in the late 1990s is regarded as an emerging public (discursive) sphere toward civil society (Yang, 2003), the e-forum-based associations emerged from the self-transformation of e-forums (to be discussed in Chapter 5) and thus reshaped the existing social organization sector and virtual space respectively.

For example, the "Green-web" (http://green-web.org), a grassroots environmental e-forum-based voluntary association, shares some common features of the Internet-based e-NGOs: 1) totally bases on e-forums; 2) pursues public benefit; 3) has written constitutions; 4) has well-designed organizational structure; 5) has stable voluntary members and frequent actions.

Such a kind of "virtual" NGO seems to be effective in certain fields. The "Light of Hope" (LOH), another e-forum-based voluntary association, which was founded in May 2001 and concentrates on helping poor children in the countryside whose families are too poor to allow them to complete their education, adopts an innovative model in raising fund — "one-to-one donation". That means, LOH does not involve in fund flow directly. Rather, the e-forum of LOH as an information platform mediating between donors and recipients. In this way, from the first time LOH raised money in September 2001 to March 2005, 816 pupils had benefited from over 500,000 Yuan in total.

3.1.3.4 New Intellectual/Business Associations

Typical intellectual associations in contemporary China usually falled into two categories of social organizations: the informal social organizations of loosely-organized academic groups and saloons, which bloomed in the 1980's loosely-controlled air, such as "Chen Ziming-Wang Juntao saga"[43]; and the formal social associations that were officially recognized professional and academic associations.

[43] See Gu (1997). Two years after Chen Ziming was released in 2002, the famous Institute of Science of Society and Economy founded by Chen and Wang in 1980's revived again and joined the wave of new intellectual associations.

However, over the course of the 1990s, though liberal intellectual saloons never disappeared at all and have revived since 1998 (see Saurmikat, 2001), one can hardly find any new well-organized intellectual associations or intellectual-based organizations. Fewsmith attributed it to the mainstream of Chinese intellectuals who seemed to be "stunned by the coercive terror" and thus remained distanced from any non-recognized intellectual-based organizations (Fewsmith, 2001b:21). Even some rare cases that came into the public view, e.g. the "All China Labour Union" launched by Yuan Hongbing and associates in 1992 and the "New Youth Academic Society" organized by Yang Zili and his friends in 1999, were quickly suppressed by the authorities.[44]

In this context, the "free market think tanks" or "civic institutes" firstly emerged from the complexity of market economy and some liberalist intellectuals who resigned from or "washed" out from official research institutions. By 1995, the Arlington-based Atlas Foundation recorded some of these early intellectual NSOs:

1) Unirule Institute of Economics (Mao Yushi, Zhang Shuguang, Sheng Hong);
2) China Center for Economic Research (Lin Yifu);
3) National Economic Research Institute/China Reform Foundation (Fan Gang);
4) Cathay Institute for Public Affairs (Liu Junning).

Among these, the "Unirule Institution of Economics" (天则) founded in 1993, was highlighted as a new Chinese intellectuals' organization by many analysts (e.g. Ma, 1998; Heberer and Sausmikat, 2004). Since the end of 1990s, this kind of NSO became more active in the public and broadly

[44] Yuan Hongbing, a former professor in science of law in Beijing University, was exiled to Guizhou province (in far south-western area) in 1993. Since the mid-1990s, he chaired the directorate of the Law School of Guizhou Normal Univerity. In July 2004, Prof. Yuan applied for "political asylum" to Australia government during his first travel outside China (also Guizhou).

Cf. "Chinese dissident author seeks asylum in Australia", in *The Sidney Morning Herald*, on August 6, 2004.

Regarding the New Youth Academic Society, an informal academic saloon, it was launched by five graduated students in May 2000 in Beijing and automatically dissolved in September 2000. Four members of this small group were arrested in March 2001, including Xu Wei, Yang Zili, etc., and convicted of "subverting state power" and sentenced to various imprisonment from 8 to 10 years in 2003.

Cf. "4 Chinese sentenced for talking of politics Youth study group also posted essays on the Internet", *The New York Times*, Thursday, May 29, 2003)

involved in environmental, educational, legal-aid fields and in pro-democracy promotion. For example,

5) World and China Institute (Beijing), launched by Li Fan in 1993;

6) Institute of Environment and Development (Beijing), launched by a sociologist Dr. Li Lailai in 1994;

7) Brooks Education Institute (Beijing), launched by a lecturer Hao Bin in 2003;

8) Beijing Aizhixing Public Health Education Institute (Beijing), launched by a public-health expert Wang Yanhai in 2002 (can be traced back to 1994).

The most striking development came with the birth of "Guang Dong Humanistic Association (GDHA)" in late 2003, as a rare case of an officially recognized large-scale intellectual association totally organized and consisting of about 200 liberal intellectuals in Guangzhou city.[45] For the intellectuals who are involved in these NSOs, they seem to have recovered from being "stunned by the coercive terror" and behave more autonomously in practice.

3.1.3.5 International NGOs

For a long time, international NGOs (INGOs) confronted an extremely high political barrier of entrance until 1991 when China's government for the first time allowed INGOs to enter and offer aids to victims in the disastrous floods in the summer of 1991 (Howell, 1997:204). From that point on, international NGOs "rushed into the country" (Hsia and White, 2002). However, by 2002, though there were reported to be over 200 INGOs conducting various missions in the mainland of China, only Ford Foundation and WWF (World Wildlife Foundation) had formally registered as legal "international foundations". (Ibid: 343)

According to Hsia and White (2002), among the 200 active INGOs in China (Young, 2004), "at least 50 registered organizations have a long-term presence in China. Approximately 150 international NGOs lack permanent registration but fund development work in China through

[45] Cf. interview with Song Xianke on May 20 2004, who is the launcher of GDHA.

local partners" (Hsia and White, 2002:334, 335). Even the former, in the landscape of foreign NGOs in China as Hsia and White portrayed, often registered as a business entity, provided that "The government seems to have adopted an informal policy of 'no recognition, yet no prohibition' as long as the work of a foreign NGO is not politically sensitive" (ibid: 338). In fact, pretending to be business companies or merely remain unregistered, a large number of International NGOs recruited representatives and volunteers and conducted projects in China, e.g. Greenpeace (Beijing and Guangzhou), World Wildlife Fund (WWF, Shanghai), Hong Kong-based Asia Animal Foundation (Chengdu, Guangzhou), Half the Sky Foundation (Beijing), International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW, Beijing), Save the Children (Shanghai) and Oxfam, etc.

My personal interview with Greenpeace (Beijing Office), also confirms such a situation: the legal status of most of the INGOs being between legal and illegal, either registered as a corporation, but without tax burden—after negotiation with the tax agency—or remain unregistered. However, it does not hamper them from cooperating with governmental agencies and thus getting the *de facto* recognition by the authority, provided that they behave like NGOs in China. For instance, some American pro-democracy NGOs also entered China aiming to promote village democracy, such as the International Republican Institute, the Carter Centre and the Ford Foundation (Shelly, 2000; Thurston, 1998).

To sum up, one may distinguish between NSOs and mainstream SOs using Salamon's criteria of NGOs: in the broadest sense, almost all of the above NSOs may fulfil the category of so-called NGOs. That is to say, relative to the "social association legal person" by which the mainstream SOs are endorsed,[46] almost all of these new social organizations have not registered as SOs, but no matter, in whatever legal status and organizational form, they are spontaneously organized by voluntary members, raise money abroad or from locals, instead of relying on governmental support,

[46] For instance, an investigation conducted by Wang, Liu, Zhao, Deng. (2004a) shows, almost all local SOs in Guangzhou city are chaired by Party-or-governmental officials of their "leader units"(*Gua Kao Dan Wei*), given the "dual-management" system of control.

yet are bound by non-profit accounting rules.[47] In addition, these NSOs are active in the public media and on the Internet, appearing to be purpose-oriented and with explicit goals, seeking self-protection for certain social groups or certain public interests.

Compared with the conventional SOs that are coined with institutionalized "state-led society" (Brook, 1997), the lowly-institutionalized but innovative grouping gives rise to some basic questions, in reference with Schmitter's (1992) three-fold criteria: how and to what extent did one NSO lower the tension derived from the authoritarian circumstances? How and to what extent did these NSOs as a whole differentiate themselves from conventional SOs, by choosing proper "strategic capacity" in social resource mobilization, or by seeking more political opportunity from the "political system-structure" in Schmitter's sense? (See also Croissant, Merkel and Sandschneider, 1999: 345)

3.2 NSOs as Institutional Innovations

From social organizations to new social organizations, it is highlighted by many Chinese scholars as a meaningful institutional innovation with profound social implications (e.g. Kang, 1999a; Wang et al., 2001; Yang, 2005). In their view, the institutional innovations have reshaped the state-society relationship and meanwhile disclose certain paths of social transformation. Kang (1999a) saw it as "a shift of power structure", and Wang Ming and his colleagues argued that these institutional innovations of SAs were the result of so-called "social choice" instead of a "governmental choice" imposed in two ways: the gradual "inner-system institutional transition (*tizhi nei zhidu bianqian*)" and the "outsider-system institutional transition (*tizhi wai zhidu bianqian*)" (Wang et al., 2001: 144-153).

In short, such institutional innovations are vis-à-vis the restrictive institutions of social organizations in three ways: the mandatory regulations, the absence of laws for the promotion of

[47] Prior to 2004 when the Ministry of Finance of PRC issued an "Accounting Rule for Civic Non-profit Organizations (民间非营利组织会计制度)", there were no mandatory regulation about accounting rules for non-profit organizations. Those NSOs relied heavily on self-discipline and their reputation. The financial scandal of CYDF revealed in early 21st century thus highlighted such problem.

NGOs, and the existence of "public institutions" *per se*.[48] Precisely, they highlight the three-fold innovative boundary-spanning: the plurality of legal status (Yang, 2005); the emerging volunteerism of NGOs (Ding, 1999); and their pursuing public benefit (Irish et al., 2004), or the formation of non-profit sector (Zhao, 2001).

3.2.1 The Plurality of NSOs' Legal Status

Within China's law system, a social association is defined as a "social association legal person (社团法人)" and imposed with a restrictive registration system by the government. The most striking innovation that the field investigation can reach on the surface is the plurality of legal status of NSOs in the absence of a legal definition of "non-profit organization".[49] The existing plurality of legal status of NSOs therefore refers to their roundabout strategies to avoid being involved in the authoritarian complexity of SA's system.

Among 36 NSOs interviewed, after two clubs were excluded, there were only three organizations which were registered as formal social associations; with most of the rest registering as ordinary business entities. According to the specific legal status, they can be largely sorted into three major types:

1) NSO-I: As legal social associations, include three authorized legal SAs, Humanism Association of Guangdong (GDHA), Grassroots Community in Shanghai (GCSH), and Alasan Society of Entrepreneur and Ecology (SEE), and one "second-level legal person" (二级法人, a kind of non-independent legal person)—Friends of Nature (FON). There are two noticeable points: Though their nominal sponsors (host units) are various official apparatus (GCSH's "host unit" is a local

[48] Cf. Ding Yuanzhu's essay (2002) on measuring volunteering in China; Leon E. Irish, Jin Dongsheng and Karla W. Simon's (2004) suggestion of accrediting NPOs as public benefit organizations (PBO) in their report for World Bank and the Ministry of Finance of China; and, estimated 1 million NPOs emerged since 1980s in Zhao Liqing's (2001) paper.

[49] Supra note 47. In the broadest sense, the concept of "non-profit organizations" includes "voluntary organizations" or "non-governmental organizations" and "tax-exempt organizations". Prof. Anheier also lists 29 types of "tax-exempt organizations" in the United States that are exempt from income and other forms of taxation according to the category of tax code number. (See Anheier,2005:41)

committee of CYLC, and SEE's local scientific bureau), they behave independently as NGOs; and, they were all recognized as legal SAs after 2004.

2) NSO-II: Most of those well-known NGOs register themselves as business entities in the official catalogue, mainly as partnership firms, such as Global Village, Green Beijing, Ai Yuan Hui, AZX, Worker Document Service at Panyu, ICO, and OCI. In most of cases, the NGOs if entitled with "institute" are actually registered in the form of partnership firms, e.g. AZX, ICO.

3) NSO-III: About two third of those NSOs interviewed remain unregistered or underground to some extent. Among the 18 unregistered NSOs in total, except one (Public Heath Promoting Association) to be approved as a partnership firm, they range in almost all fields of NSOs: three independent Environmental Student Association (Green Stone, Green Student's Forum, Green Student's Camp), two e-forum-based NSOs (Light of Hope, Green Web), one loosely connected e-forum-based national association, some prominent NGOs like GGF, China Development Brief, Xinjiang Natural Protection Foundation, and two self-organized houseowner's Associations.

In addition, there are two registered organizations: one environmental Student Association sponsored by university (Scientific Exploration and Outdoor Life Society of Beijing Forestry University, SENOL) and one officially recognized Owners' Association. For the former, Beijing Forestry University is involved here as merely a nominal sponsor (namely "*Gua Kao*"-host unit) of an "inner association of the university". For the latter, the local official "neighborhood committee" also participated in it as a stakeholder, according to "Beijing Regulation of Owner Association".

In a recent study, after examining social associations in several provinces and the whole PNEU sector, Xie (2004) observed virtually 80% of so-called civic organizations "existed illegally", even though by April 2000 a ban against "illegal civic organizations" went into effect.[50] Yang's

[50] See the "Provisional Regulation of Banning Illegal Civic Organizations", as the "21st Decree of MCA", issued by MCA on April 10, 2000.

(2005) recent study of China's ENGOs also came to an analogous conclusion regarding the legal status structure of NSOs as described above.

In fact, all interviewed NGOs reported the extreme difficulties encountered when they sought to register according to legal procedures. They attributed their choices that remain "unregistered" or pretend to be business entities, which are "illegal technologically" indeed, to so-called "dual-management system" — a tightly controlled mechanism of "registration and management". I.e. besides the administrative responsibility of registration and management of MCA and local agencies, the nominal "sponsoring unit", as a necessary condition for registration, "is responsible for ensuring that the subsidiary organization obeys the rules, and is responsible for the group's actions".[51] The dual registration-management system per se thus actually functions as a high-level institutional barrier for the freedom of association.[52]

Ironically, the plurality of the legal status of NSOs eventually displays a structural duality of NSOs' sector outside the registration-management system: as the "survival strategies" of NSOs (Bentley, 2004) and as the outcome of *de facto* recognition by the authority.

First, confronting the high-level entrance barriers of SOs, it seems a practical solution or survival strategies to become an independent legal entity (see Bentley, 2004). Because: 1) Despite the for-profit legal nature regardless of business entity, to be an independent legal entity is necessary for a NSO to open a bank account and then accept fund; 2) Registering as a business entity appears to be much easier technologically. It is simply subject to the "Industry and Commercial Bureau" and the local tax agencies. According to the interviews with the NSOs (NSO-II), at least, the governmental agencies of business affairs and tax can be "lobbied" through intensive negotiation. It is possible for NSOs to build reciprocal trust with these governmental agencies and then register as

[51] Cf. the report of Human Rights in China, "China: Freedom of Association Regulated Away", p.17, June 1999, available at: http://www.hrichina.org/fs/view/downloadables/pdf/downloadable-resources/association_99.pdf . It fully described the dual system and how it actually imposed entrance costs upon social organizations.

[52] In fact, the registration is nearly an impossible mission for NSOs. When any spontaneously organized NSO attempts to register as a legal SA, the civil affairs officials would not accept such application in most of cases, nor show any plausible intention to approve the application, according to those interviewed NSO's launchers.

ad hoc business entities exempted from tax. 3) Such a "for-profit legal nature" has not hampered these NSOs from being recognized as "non-for-profit NGOs" by the international NGOs and inter-recognized by themselves. Rather, to register as a business entity has been accepted as a practical strategy by almost all respondents and transformed into the shared pool of "local knowledge" or "tacit knowledge" inside NSOs. The inter-recognition seems more important than the official recognition. 4) Those which remain unregistered are only small-scale NSOs. For them, in most of instances, the small grants from large-scale NGOs or INGOs as their most important fund source do not impose strict requirements, such as independent bank accounts.

Secondly, as Hsia and White (2002: 338) observe, "The government seems to have adopted an informal policy of 'no recognition, yet no prohibition' as long as the work of a foreign NGO is not politically sensitive." In practice, such a tolerance attitude may represent their *de facto* recognition, which was verified by almost all interviewed NSOs. Most of respondents in my fieldwork held, by and large, identical views that civil affairs officials did know and treated them as non-profit, voluntary and public benefit organizations, regardless of whether they were registered as firms or unregistered, as though the regulations (ad hoc the "Provisional Regulation of Banning Illegal Civic Organizations") actually functioned against other illegal organizations, or were merely a worthless/nonsensical law. Consequently, NSOs as a whole have gained *de facto* recognition to a large extent from the Civil Affairs Agency.

3.2.2 The Emerging Volunteerism

According to Ding's (2002) large-scale survey, the "estimated percentage of Chinese aged 18 and older, who volunteered their time, skill and energy to human development in 2001 was 769.57 million in both formal and informal volunteering sectors, the volunteering participation rate being 85.2% (of the total population aged 18 or older than). And the total number of hours volunteered was 18,963.84 million."

Another independent survey conducted at almost the same time shows us a different result, indicating that the actual volunteering level might be far lower than Ding's doubtful conclusion. This is despite the officially reported voluntary actions were seemingly as high as Ding's, it is stated that "the real volunteers is very scarce in many instances".[53] This small-scale survey, nevertheless bound to Pudong district of Shanghai city, falsifies the official statistics—also as the data base of Ding's argument—that absolutely most of reported so-called volunteering actions were organized by various governmental agencies, from official household organizations to Communist Youth League to the Civil Affair Agency etc. Therefore they were indeed "mandatory volunteering". Similar to the situation in the communist era, it is a pedagogical tool or a political mission for those students who involve in the "officially organized volunteering actions". In this sense, so-called "volunteerism failure" (Salamon, 1987) in China may be worth measuring, especially those bound to the conventional SOs which depend heavily on existing chapters and networks, such as CYLC's Hope Project.

Then it is not surprising that such a "mandatory volunteering" may easily lead to the statement that "most of (urban) grassroots associations are…voluntary-run" (see Wang and He, 2004). Here, the "grassroots associations" in Wang and He's (2004) sense refer to the officially recognized SOs sector and such a conclusion is on the basis of official data—and still concerning the volunteering in the Pudong district of Shanghai city, as if the whole SO sector had changed to being voluntary. Therefore, Yang Tuan, who is one of the leading scholars in Chinese NGO studies and chaires the above independent small-scale survey, doubts the validity of official data about the scale of volunteering and holds that "governmental behaviours are unable to promote volunteerism spirit" (Yang, 2003).

The above debates imply the actual volunteering should be much narrower than Ding's exaggeration, especially using the benchmark of Salamon and Sokolowski's comparative measuring

[53] Cf. "Report of Volunteering in New Pudong Distric Survey (2001)", conducted by "Trainning Centre of Social Work of Shanghai" and "Association of Social Workers of Pudong" since October of 2000, authored by Xie Zhexian, available at: http://www.social-policy.info/1030.htm.

of the voluntary sector of 24 countries.[54] According to Salamon and Sokolowski (2001), the real voluntary "membership is not coerced or mandated by law and the entities customarily receive donations of money, other property, or labour." From this point, I intend to narrow current volunteering to those voluntary-run NSOs as the positive evidence of emerging volunteerism in urban China.

More importantly, Wardell and associates (Wardell et al., 2000) suggest that volunteerism should best be described as a "continuum" — the recruiting, placing, supporting and managing of volunteers should be based on organizations, namely voluntary organizations. The real volunteerism helps us to differentiate NSOs from SOs, and particularly, helps us to understand NSOs' institutional innovations that "de-institutionalize" three-fold limitations of SOs (RRMSO):

1) The geographic exclusiveness. According to the Article 13-2 of RRMSO, an applicant association will not be approved registration if there has been an existing SA of the same "type" in the same administrative area. The existing conventional SOs are used to be the barrier of the new entrance, and thus any self-organized association is principly excluded from entering the system of SOs;
2) The chapter limitation. According to the Article 19 of RRMSO, SAs should not establish local chapters, nor recruit members beyond its registered area; the branches of SA should not establish any sub-branch;
3) The action boundary. According to the Article 19 of RRMSO, the SAs that carry out actions or recruit members should not exceed the registered range of both geographic area and specific actions.

Apparently, the "Article 13" of RRMSO can easily block the entrance or legalization of most NSOs (mainly NSO II, III), and meanwhile the "Article 19" poses a high-level risk on NSO I. Though

[54] In which, according to Salamon and Sokolowski, "so-called informal volunteering, i.e. voluntary work carried on outside any organizational framework" was not included, "because this type of volunteering is very difficult to define, and therefore poses serious problems of cross-national comparability."

they seem, nevertheless, not to be as rigid in the practice as mentioned earlier that many NGOs have achieved *de facto* recognition through negotiation with the governmental agencies, the differentiation between the mainstream SOs and self-organized NSOs has been deeply rooted in this design of institutional exclusion.

More significantly, as Yang's survey has verified the emerging volunteerism in the NGOs in Shanghai as well,[55] the volunteerism has "de-institutionalized" RRMSO' limitations to some extent in practice, from the investigation of FON: 1) the large-scale volunteers in fact have blurred the boundary between volunteers and members; 2) among about 1,500 formal constituents, over half are nationwide "remote members/volunteers"; 3) the voluntary actions of local constituents have been frequent and routinized for over ten years; 4) by mediate of FON's small-grant programs and communicative platforms (mainly e-forum and printed newsletters) they have formed a nationwide network of volunteers and volunteer organizations.[56] All these aspects of volunteerism appear to blur the organizational boundaries of NSOs. In the following chapter, I will further the discussion about such a "de-organization" effect, namely the platformalization of NSOs.

3.2.3 Public Benefit/Non-Profit Vs. "Public Institutions"

In addition to the innovations NSOs achieved in the legal nature and volunteerism, the change of purposes for public benefit and not-for-profit may be regarded as the third institutional innovation of NSOs. Through which, NSOs as a whole differentiate themselves from mainstream SOs and club-like organizations, but also, as a rule of the NSO sector since inception, it contains the internal structure for the further structuration — the professionalism and politicization. (To elaborate later)

[55] Supra note 53.

[56] Cf. A member survey of FON (2004), an online document, available at: http://www.fon.org.cn/backup/membersurvey.doc. In addition, in interview with Zhang Jilian, she emphasized why FON kept low-keyed in the public was due to the potential legal risk during recruiting "remote" members/volunteers. And, she said in practice she or FON did not and had no intention to distinguish volunteers from formal members. Contrary to FON's leading position in ENGO field, this low-key image was indirectly verified by Wang et al.'s analysis of China's media reports about FON. (Wang et al.,2000: 172-173)

Comparably, within Chinese context, the SOs are viewed as a part of the sector of public institutions.[57] Being a broader form of social organization of China's society, the public institutions, including some official SAs and GONGOs, are defined to be non-profit and for-public-benefit.[58] Nevertheless most of them actually behave as "enterprises in practice" (Su et al., 1999). The World Bank also concludes that the mainstream SOs do not meet the due requirement of public benefit (Irish et al., 2004). For example, the financial scandal of CYDF—a GONGO (government-organized NGO), also a public benefit-oriented mixed entity of "public institution" and "social association", was revealed in the early 21st century and thus mirrored such a problem. Due to this reason, one could hardly categorize conventional SOs as a whole into "the Third Sector", but "the Fourth Sector" more correctly (Yang, 2004). Wang Ming and his colleagues' report also find similar problem widely existed in the PNEU (Private non-enterprise units) sector (Wang et al., 2004).

On the other hand, "the fact that NPOs have not been defined as having made no profits makes it impossible for related tax policies to give full support to NPOs" (Irish et al., 2004). The absence of non-profit organization's law (NPOs), e.g. an ad hoc tax law for the promotion of NPOs, is the other side of the coin of the equation above of the distorted nature of public institutions. The SOs thus were widely encountering the financial difficulties during their fund raising (see Wang, 2002; Wang et al., 2000; Su et al., 1999).[59]

In this context, the introduction of the concept of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) from 1994 and the formation of NGO sector in the recent decade highlight their distinctive purpose for public benefit and not-for-profit nature. The institutional innovations of NGOs are

[57] The "public institutions" here involve a large-scale social service sector, covering public institutions of education, hospitals, broadcasting institutions, public-sponsored think tanks, and other service organizations attached to the governmental apparatus, etc. Among four types of legal persons within China's law, they are categorized into the "legal person of public institutions (事业单位法人)" according to China's "General Principle of Civil Law (1984)".

[58] Cf. "Provisional Regulations for Registration and Management of Non-commercial Institutions" (PRRMNCI), issued by the State Council of the Peoples' Republic of China, Order No. 252, passed by the eighth plenum of the standing committee of the State Council on the 25th of September 1998.

The Regulation of RRMSO (Article 4.29), too, clearly stipulates that SAs should be non-distributive and non-profit.

[59] According to a latest official report, by November 2005, less than 1% (10 thousands) China's enterprises have donated for public benefit, while the sum of enterprise donations was less than 0.1% of GDP per year, said Chen Xinnian, a senior fellow of National Committee of Development and Reform of China. See Xinhua News Agency, Nov.14, 2005.

mainly reflected on the actions inside NGOs, relating to the shaping of NGOs, such as various projects of "organization building", "NGO evaluation" and the like. In most instances, those leading NGOs form a bridge between the INGOs (as consumers at stake) and grassroots NGOs. For example, IED and CANGO organized three programs which sought to improve the accounting system of grassroots NGOs since 2000 and 2002. And, over two thirds of sampling ENGOs confirmed that they depended heavily on these projects to gain more social recognition and social resources. Eventually, one observes, some of which were spilled over to the public and policy-makers and partly institutionalized (yet very limited) via so-called "government innovations" or "governance innovations" in 2004. In that year, two new regulations were enacted ("Regulation of Foundations" and "Accounting Principle for Civic Non-profit Organizations (民间非营利组织会计制度)").

Therefore, by 2001, as Beijing-based China Development Brief (2001) documented, there were about 250 active Chinese NGOs that were inter-recognized and also recognized by the interntional community of NGOs as a self-defined and independent NGO sector in China. The innovations above help China's NGOs differentiate the boundary between NGOs and conventional SOs and function as a mechanism for consumer control.[60]

Still, one can observe how the non-profit mechanism begins to influence NSO's organizational change. For instance, the transformation of Unirule Institute of Economics in recent years. Under increasing financial pressure, this well known "free market think tank" split away from its for-profit department in 1998 (to a new entity, Unirule Consulting Co. Ltd)[61] and launched a

[60] Theoretically, the above development proves what Rose-Ackerman (1986) and James and Rose-Ackerman's (1986) account that the whole non-profit sector can be defined as "a producer of public goods" where likely there appears both "market failure" and "government failure". In this instance, they see "nonprofits as a mechanism for consumer (donator) control when other methods of monitoring are ineffective", given the "contract failure and asymmetric information" non-profit organizations confronted.(ibid: 20)

Rose-Ackerman collected fundamental literatures in NPO's economics studies in her 1986's collection. In which, Burton Weisbrod's seminal paper "Toward a Theory of the Voluntary Nonprofit Sector in a Three-sector Economy", was also collected and reprinted.

[61] Cf. Zhang Shuguang (2003).

new public-benefit-oriented NGO (China Research Center for Public-Private Partnerships) in 2003. Unirule Institute since then became a membership association, comprising economists, entrepreneurs, governmental officials and institutional members.[62]

3.3 Puzzles of Innovations

To sum up, the threefold institutional innovations above have attracted increasing attentions from those who were concerned with China's NSOs, or NGOs. The innovations (plurality of legal status, volunteerism, and non-profitness, etc) in relation to the restrictive regulations of social organizations have helped NGOs differentiate from the mainstream SOs.

It should be stressed, that it is around these regulative boundaries that so-called "negotiating relations" or "new corporatism" between NSOs and the state are based. In the corporatism perspective, these institutional innovations, nevertheless remaining non-institutionalized to a large extent, are explained as an outcome of somewhat "indispensable institutional force" derived from the state to fill "the public space left by the withdrawal of the state", because "government's NGO policy is decisive in the sector's existence and growth" (Ma, 2002b: 323).

From such a state centralism argument that replaces the dynamics or subjectivity of the limited institutional or social innovations of NGOs to the authoritarian state seems unable to understand the essentially structural change behind the autonomous development of NSOs. The theoretical conjunction of the political society and civil society that is the premise of corporatism account is displaced into two separated parts: the closed political society (or elite politics) and the private society without self-organization. It raises another theoretical puzzle about the understanding of NSOs' innovations, and also, relating to the questions whether the emerging NSOs in present urban China can develop into an autonomous civil society under authoritarian environment, and, how and to what extent it can transform the authoritarian state.

[62] See the online documents of China Research Center for Public-Private Partnerships, available at: http://www.unirule.org.cn/ppp/ccpppclub.doc, and http://www.ccppp.org/ccpppintro.pdf .

3.3.1 NGO or Not?

Jude Howell was among those who first launched the question: "can the old mass organizations and the new social organizations be considered as non-governmental organizations?" (Howell, 1996:187-88) It sheds the light to the implicit boundaries between NGOs and SOs, also one of the most often heard puzzling questions in fieldwork: Are they (NSOs) really non-governmental organizations as the same as the counterpart in the West?

This line of thought markedly influenced Chinese scholars, who widened NGO's range and sorted numerous semi-official SOs into GONGOs (Government-organized NGOs) and QUANGO (Quasi-Autonomous Governmental Organizations) or even Quasi-Governmental Organizations, taking such categorizing for granted as "institutional innovation" (e.g. Wang and He, 2004). However, as doubted by Heilmann (1999), such a corporatism (*Staatskorporatismus*) category may over-emphasize both GONGOs' practical role and the state's control of social associations. In the view of those independent NGO activists, such GONGOs have nothing to do with NGO but "state-owned organizations" (Young, 2001).

Entering the 21st century, financial scandals which occurred in GONGOs (like Project Hope carried out by CYDF) and NGOs (such as "China Mama"—a small non-commercial enterprise), rocked China's NGOs both inside and outside academic circles,[63] and gave rise to a debate concerning the "legal dilemma" and "voluntary dilemma" of China's NGOs and calling for a redefining of China's NGO/NPO (e.g. Deng, 2002).

In this context, some Chinese scholars sought to distinguish "the third sector (NGOs)" from the current SO sector to cope with the chaotic cognition derived from the conflict between two criteria—the legal definition of social organizations and the academic definition of NGO according

[63] For example, the financial scandles of Project Hope (see also Heberer and Sausmikat, 2004), and the financial scandle of "China Mama" Hu Manli. (See *Nanfang Zhoumo*, Dec.13, 2001, Feb.7, 2002, also available at: http://www.usc.cuhk.edu.hk/wk_wzdetails.asp?id=2011)

Chinese scholars like Xie Haiding (2004) too noticed such a "legal dilemma" and "voluntary dilemma".

to the widely accepted criteria in the West.[64] Yang Tuan (2004), for instance, advocates a new categorizing—the "Fourth Sector" as a theoretical solution to split away the large-scale public institutions and officially sponsored SOs from the NGO sector.[65]

On the other hand, the large-scale informal organizations, mainly internet-based organizations and some community-based organizations (like autonomous House-owners' associations) and surged rapidly after 1998, are often overlooked in current NGO literature.[66]

However, with the benchmark of Jude Howell's (1996:188) criterion of new social organization that, "the degree of their autonomy vis-à-vis the Party/state in term of funding, organizational goals, staffing and structures", either the above two informal NSOs or the five categories of NSOs share at least four common points as 1) organized, 2) voluntary, 3) autonomy and 4) non-profit (non-distributive). Vis-à-vis Salamon's definition, they are not bound to private but highlight a broad range as 5) non-official and 6) the concerns in public benefit.[67] Such a conception of NSOs allows varying legal status and organizational forms, and invites those "transformed SOs", provided they raise their own fund for public-benefit purposes and not for distributive purposes.

Clearly, this range of NSO is equivalent to the use of NGO in the West, but narrower than the corporatism definition of social organizations and broader than formal NGOs in China.

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[64] See the overview of the conference of "The 3rd Sector and Governance", on September 19, 2002, at Beijing University, online report, available at: http://www.social-policy.info/955.htm.

[65] Close to what Howell (1997) intended in his categorizing of China's SOs (mass organizations, semi-official organizations, popular organizations, and illegal organizations), Wang Ming and his colleagues' investigation too proved that among over half the samples of SOs the posts of directors were held by party or governmental agency's officials and thus China's registered SOs as a whole could be viewed as the extention of the CCP or government to high degree.(Wang, Liu, Zhao, Deng, 2004b)

[66] For example, the widely-cited *Civil Society in Making: 250 Chinese NGOs* (Young, 2001) does not collect these two kinds of new social organizations.

[67] Supra note 9.

3.3.2 Depoliticized or Politicized?

In the case of FON, FON and Liang carefully restricted themselves to depoliticized fields for a long time (e.g. environmental education), which gives rise to the second empirical question in the context that the "asserting rights NSOs" have emerged from such depoliticized predecessors: Whilst those early NGOs appear to remain depoliticized, is it fair to say the whole NSO sector has been politicized by the emerging "asserting rights NSOs"?

For a long time, as a well-spread metaphor reflected that China's ENGOs attempted to maintain "*lü er bu dang* (greening without green party, launched by Liang Congjie)" (Wang et al., 2000:177), such a pioneering group of China's NGOs developed at the price of avoiding involvement with political issues and contentious actions during the last decade, as though they had created "discursive spaces which are shielded from the gaze of the authoritarian Party-state…" (Thornton, 2002:691).

However, previously mentioned "legal, voluntary and financial dilemmas" of NGOs strongly suggest a contrary evolution—the depoliticized NGOs seem to lack self-enforcing mechanisms. The domestic enterprises in China have very low-level incentives of donating (Su et al., 1999); and the SOs seem to be "voluntary failure" due to the political control over SOs (Wang, 1999). I.e. the over-politicization of social life may account the depoliticization of formal NGOs and the absence of a promotion law of NPOs (NGOs), as an institutional bottle neck for the sustainable development of NGOs.

On the other hand, a significant development stemming from the context of on-going transformational society as though a spontaneous "social protection" in Polanyi's ([1957] 2001) sense, has been largely overlooked. For some observers, including Thornton, still maintain "indirection and irony are by no means the only tools available to protesters in the face of repressive regimes" (Thornton, 2002: 690). Nevertheless, the rise of asserting rights organizations since the late 1990s as mentioned before that has changed the landscape of urban politics.

Falun Gong (FLG), for instance, a *Qigong* association, also the case illustrated by Thornton, resorted to large-scale protesting abroad after it was repressed after FLG's peaceful street appeal in May 1999. Meanwhile, in association with the surging contentions in rural China (see O'Brien, 2001), the rise of "social vulnerable groups" and associated contentious protests asserting social justice began to influence the agenda setting of public media, even policy-making of the central government, after the event of Sun Zhigang's death in March 2003.[68] Even ENGOs have widened their agenda and become deeply involved in environmental politics in recent years, e.g. an updated lobby action against two mega dam projects in the Salween river (Nu Jiang) from 2004 to 2005.[69]

By these events, one can not only observe the self-organization of the society, but the contesting relationship between the system/elite politics and the NSOs/emerging civil society. That is the politcization involved in this dissertation, which means in two folds: theoretically on the one side, the interpenetration between the authoritarian (environmental) system and the emerging autopoietic (living) system; and the concrete form of contentious politics—the social movements on the other side, for the social movements per se mean the politicization of private life in the general sense.

Therefore, people may ask, what has happened to China's NSOs? How have they changed authoritarian politics since the late 1990s? Luhmann's linking of certain events to a triggered process urges us further toward the transformation of NSOs from depoliticized to politicized.

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[68] See Murray Scot Tanner's Testimony of "Chinese Government Responses to Rising Social Unrest", before the US-China Economic and Security Review Commission, on April 14, 2005, The RAND Corporation, CT-240, 2005.

See also Hurst and O'Brien's (2002) "China's Contentious Pensioners", in which they documented the surge of working class protests in recent years.

[69] See *The New York Times*, April 8, 2004, "Beijing suspends plan for large dam" by Jim Yardley; and *The Economics Monthly (Jingji Yuekan)*, "Nu Jiang Da Ba Ge Zhi Bei Hou de Min Jian Li Liang" (the Civil Force behind Suspended Salween Dam Project), by Cao Haidong and Zhang Peng, No.5, 2004.

3.3.3 Institutionalization or Structuration?

Though the above innovations are relating to specific institutional boundaries, there is little evidence indicating that such innovations have been substantially institutionalized at the law level, whilst the law-making process sought to tighten the registration-based control institutions over social organizations from 1989 on without interruption (Ma, 2002b). For example, from those revised regulations in recent years, few innovations in redefining the specific functions and positions of NGOs/NSOs were integrated or reflected in the SOs-related regulations, such as the "Donation Law" (enacted in 1999), the "Regulation of Foundations" (revised in 2004), and the "Regulations of Social Associations" (revised in 2004).

In contrast to state-centred institutional innovations, the consolidation of NSOs' innovations, namely the institutionalising of NSOs in Lin's (2001b) sense, appears to be conducted and furthered along the social boundaries of the complex of a new institution-structure. That is a structuration process, in opposition to the institutionalisation process.

The structuration process, here, refers to the "situated practice of individual agents" by mediation of "spatial and social forces" on the one hand, and the "meso-level networks of relations and practices" (Stones, 2005:6) on the other hand. They constitute a new meso-structure of NSOs-centred "institution-structure", namely a new system of rules and resources of social reproduction in Giddens' terms (Giddens, 1984: xxxi).

According to Smelser, the meso-structures of "institution-structure" are located at "the heart and soul of our civil society—affect the character and effectiveness of the social integration of the larger society" (Smelser, 1997:48). I.e. during the social transformation process, institutions can be seen as structures at a general level of social organization. The social organization, here, should be better understood as "a mature, specialized and comparatively rigid part of the social structure" (Cooley, 1909: 319). The NSOs' institutional innovations above then are but a concrete form of "social differentiation" or "structural differentiation in response to political conflict" (Smelser,

1997:46,56). The foregoing debates along categories of NSO/NGO and SO/GONGO might reflect their structural difference as a response of the conflicting circumstances in present-day urban China.

The FON, for instance, its governance structure may perfectly mirror the structural difference between the conventional social institution and innovative structures of self-organization (to be elaborated on later). In recent years, FON seems to be quite "habitualized" in the terms of limited innovations, for it has not sought to change the "second-level legal person of SA" while rejecting independent auditing.[70] The whole NSO sector in this regard, whose innovations, such as the "*de facto* recognition" and the emerging volunteerism and non-profit mechanism represent, are between that of the "rigid parts" of the existing institutions and a new mesostructure of NSOs, and seems to be "legitimate but not institutionalized" (see Tolbert and Zucker, 1994), i.e. to be legitimate but not necessary to be legalized. The legality here is subject to the authoritarian rules in China.

In short, the change from conventional social organizations to new social organizations has demonstrated some substantially institutional and social innovations within the existing complex of authoritarian institution-structure, whilst the Party-state still remains and advances such a authoritarian control in the urban China during the market economy transition.

Then, confronted with the institutional obstacles during the institutionalization, how and to what extent do those NSOs as a whole further their innovations structurally and pave the way for structural transformation? This may be the most worthwhile thesis in the transformation process.

Following the structuration postulations (see Figure 2.2), the above threefold innovation may be extended to three-stage structuration process as Figure 3.4 shows: the legitimation of NSOs, the social construction of NSO agents by means of Internet communication and networking, and the overall politicization of NSOs. The above innovations are only a starting point of the structuration

[70] Supra note 52.

of NSOs in the past 15 years. In the remainder of this dissertation, the three-level structuration process is to be elaborated.

Figure 3.4: Three stages of NSO's structuration process.

Chapter 4

THE LEGITIMATION OF NEW SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS

Professionalism and platformalization

"Viewed logically, the difference itself is something third."

---P.G. Herbst (1961:88)[71]

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the first level of structuration—the legitimization of NSOs. Focusing on the categorical change from the legality to legitimacy, the institutional innovations may be properly understood as the deorganization induced by the restrictive and rigid regulative boundaries of SOs through which NSOs stemmed from an alternative social space outside SOs and then gained increasing social recognition. As I observe from the fieldwork investigation, this legitimation consists of two parts of deorganization: the professionalism and platformalization. [72]

Ironically, as most of the professional social workers in those investigated NSOs were volunteers in the beginning, the professionalism actually stemmed from the volunteerism that was forged by the NGOs in their early development and later underpinned NGOs' development. In practice, it functions as a measurable signal indicating the public-benefit organizational nature and thus offsets against the negative effects relating to the confusing legal status of NSOs.

The platformalization goes furtherer in blurring the organizational boundaries. In most of instances, various platforms, which function as the specific media between the public and NSOs,

[71] Cf. P.G. Herbest (1961), recited from Niklas Luhmann ([1984]1995), p.29.

[72] Here, the "deorganization" refers to the "de-institutionalization" of the social institutions on which the conventional SOs rely.

The concept of de-institutionalization was firstly launched by Gehlen (1957), is used to refer to certain instances where the "scope of institutionalized actions may diminish", for a variety of historical reasons (Berger and Luckmann, 1967:99). See also Berger and Luckmann (1967:223-4, note 50,51). For Geheln, the de-institutionalization takes place in private sphere, differed from the public sphere involved here.

such as the "Hope Project" of CYDF, are utilized by formal NGOs in promoting social influence. And, almost all unregistered small-scale NGOs actually exist in the form of specific platforms.

Vis-à-vis the formalization of those innovations to be institutionalized in Cohen and Arato's sense (see Cohen and Arato, 1992: 555-6), the professionalism and platformalization therefore demonstrates to us a different orientation during the consolidation of innovations: They have helped NSOs gain increasing inter-recognition and societal recognition. Such a society-oriented development is regarded as a specific condition of legitimation to define the organizational boundaries, also theoretically, the starting point of structuration analysis.

4.1 The Professionalism of NSOs

In general, professionalism means a separation between "volunteers and paid works, employers and employees, and probably in age, social class, and educational background", leading to increasing pressures for the overall management and policy implementation of voluntary organizations (Leat, 1990: 142). In practice, the emerging professionalism in China's NSOs can be measured through three dimensions:

- **Organizational dimension**: the governance structure, involving the performance and direction of organization; (Anheier, 2005: 231)
- **Personal dimension**: career stability and mobility of NSO workers (staff);
- **Sector dimension**: e.g. the proportion of those leaders as professional social workers among all sample NSOs, and the proportion of those NSOs with full-time-deployed staff (members) among all samples NSOs, etc.

Theoretically, following Parsons' seminal research of professionalism (Parsons, 1939), Baroker (1973) in his PhD dissertation highlighted the rising professionalism which was indicated by the proportion of social work leaders of the voluntary organizations in the progressive movements in the late 19th century in the United States. Two specific professionalism were involved in such a kind

of professionalism for those voluntary organizations: the organizational professionalization and social professionalism.

In light of Rose-Ackerman and James (1986), it is the outside customer control (consumerism) that induces the "organizational professionalization" of NPOs to singal the "external (social) accountability", while the performance and impacts of NPOs/NGOs are difficult to measure (Anheier, 2005:190, 201).

On the other hand, the social professionalism may indeed represent the professionalism of voluntary organizations in practice, because the social professionalism "creates a situation in which one group of people…'know best' and then charged with the task of deciding what is best for the organization, and they employ a worker who professes to 'know better' " (Leat, 1990:142). Compared with the organizational professionalism, the social professionalism is relating more to the personal and sector dimensions that represents the "internal accountability" in practice.

4.1.1 The Organizational Professionalization of NSOs

According to Anheier, for NGO or NPO, the governance "is about ensuring the fit between the organization's mission and its activities and performance," and the governance structure consists of organizational performance and stakeholder relations (Anheier, 2005: 231). In which, a dual structure is involved in the governance structure: the responsibility for the organization's performance and direction and the interaction between the state's formal institutions and the institutions of civil society (ibid). Therefore, the governance structure may be seen an appropriate indicator of the organizational institutionalization of NGOs, while the stakeholder relations may be used to measure the accountability of NGO (bottom lines).

FON is such a typical case as an agent of organizational professionalization. FON (Friends of Nature), one of the earliest NGOs in China, concentrating on "public environmental education", has pioneered China's NSOs since the mid-1990s.

Early works on this representative case have reached a frame of FON's governance structure, including three aspects: (1) FON's "institutional innovations", particularly in stereotyping the NGO (self-governance, non-profitness, public-benefit, and such like, see Wang et al., 2000: 161-175); (2) FON's social implications in changing state-society relations, namely "negotiating with the state" under the "Leninist strategy of control" (Saich, 2000; Yang, 2005), in favour of state-centric "better governance" in recent years (see Ma, 2002b; Yu, 2001); and (3) FON's organizational defects (e.g.Wang et al., 2000). On this basis, I re-examine the twofold governance structure of FON: the stakeholder relations and organizational performance.

4.1.1.1 The Stakeholder Relations of FON

In the "more or less nervous air around the 4-year anniversary of June 4th", four liberal intellectuals gathered in Linglongyuan Park in a far-out suburb launched the first Beijing-based ENGO in China, the "Friends of Nature" (FON),[73] nevertheless their first application was denied by the Civil Affair Agency in November 1993. After one-year negotiation with the "International Academy for Chinese Culture" in which Liang chaired as vice director of this Academy and the Ministry of Culture that was the sponsor or "host unit" and finally arrived at an arrangement with the Ministry of Civil Affairs on March 31, 1994: FON could be recognized as a "second-level social association"—the "Green Academy" of the "International Academy for Chinese Culture".

From the perspective of stakeholder theory launched by Freeman (1984), FON's innovations may be based on a stakeholder complex since the beginning that coincided with Mr. Liang's social relations. Through which, one could understand FON's resource and influence that is bound to the corporatism embeddedness upon China's society.

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[73] Supra note 32.

It was on the World Environment Day of 1993, (June 5). These four liberal iintellectuals were Liang Congjie, Liang Xiaoyan, Wang Lixiong, and Yang Dongping.

Liang, the grand son of Liang Qichao, one of the most prominent modern Chinese intellectuals in the late Qing Dynasty, held a seat of the National Committee of CPPCC from the 1990s on. That Academy was founded in 1984 by some famous Chinese intellectuals and sponsored by the Ministry of Culture.

Regarding the complex of FON's "social relations", at least six stakeholders were sketched by the observers: government, corporate, community, sponsor, benefitee, and others (Wang et al., 2000:173-75). Nevertheless, some of other stakeholder relations were overlooked by Wang and his colleagues, while some relations have changed from 2000 on. Fro example, by 2000, FON had not developed connections with the (residential) communities, nor with other local NGOs. Meanwhile, the media was only a weak stakeholder of FON by 2000, according to FON's publications. Relatively, FON had developed intensive cooperations with INGOs and international corporations. The relationship with governments appeared to be implicit.

Borrowing Anheier's (2005:228) "stakeholder chart of nonprofit organizations", one can outline 13 "bottom lines" involved in FON's stakeholder network (see Figure 4.1 below). In this stakeholder chart, the upward connections with governmental agencies, the public, and INGOs mainly rest on Prof. Liang, Prof. Yang and Ms. Liang, while the downward relations with primary schools and grassroots NGOs are maintained by several platforms (programs) and volunteers.[74]

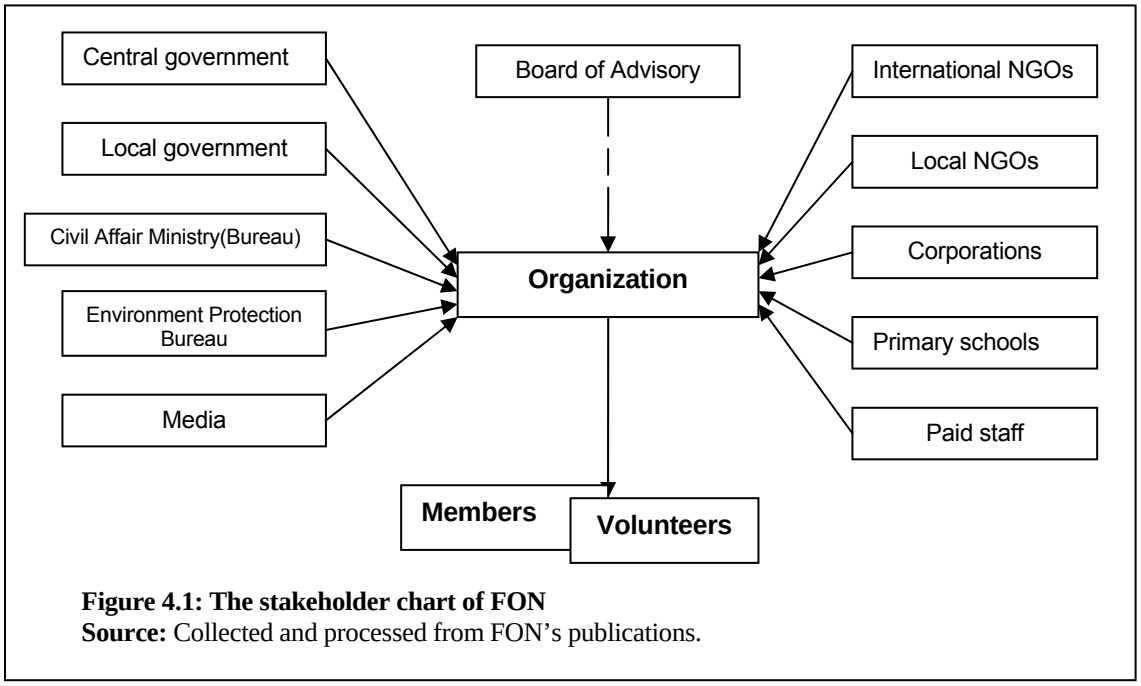

Figure 4.1: The stakeholder chart of FON
Source: Collected and processed from FON's publications.

[74] Cf. supra note 32, and interviewed with Han Tao on April 19, 2004.
Han, was a volunteer of FON who participated in almost all environmental education programs of FON, and is currently the director of a newly-established NGO concerntrating on public health education and advocating citizen's rights of bicycle in Beijing.

First, within this diagram of stakeholder relations, a most striking change is most of interviewees who have engaged in FON's developmental programs have experienced a transformation from FON's volunteers to the professional social workers or the initiators/leaders of other NSOs. For example, Gao Tian, Shen Xu, Hu Jia, Han Tao, Rao Yong, and Wen Bo (see Appendix I), all these well-known professional NGO workers confirmed during interviews that they had been volunteers of FON's environmental protection actions at the beginning of their social worker careers; and after launching new NGOs or participating in other ones they still maintained good relations with FON, both personal and organizational, both cooperative and sponsoring. In the present day, many social workers like them, constitute perhaps the most important social capital (resource) of FON.

Second, Wang et al. (2000:173-4) reported that in the 1990s FON over-relied on INGOs' financial support in the circumstance where the tax-exempt institutions or promoting-donation law were absent in China. In the financial year of 2003, the situation remained unchanged. The donations raised from Chinese enterprises and individuals were 138,098 Yuan, only 8.2% of total income, the rest was from INGOs.[75]

Third, FON turned to fund distribution for small local NGOs in recent years through various small-grant programs sponsored by INGOs and thus became more reliant on INGOs. From 1999 to 2004, FON involved at least four international cooperative programs:

- "Shell Better Environment (Beijing)" action, since 1998, sponsored by the Royal Dutch/Shell Group Company and cooperated with Hong Kong-based "Friends of the Earth", concentrating on encouraging middle school students to design creative plans of environmental protection;
- "Misereor Green Hope" action, since 1999, sponsored by the German Miserror Foundation and cooperated with CYDF, concentrating on recruiting volunteers to conduct environmental education for rural pupils of "Hope Primary Schools";

[75] See the "Financial Report of FON (2003)", in *FON Newsletter* (自然之友通讯), 2004, No.1, p.19.

- "Misereor Small Grant Program", also named Dandelion Project by FON, since 2003, was sponsored by the German Miserror Foundation, concentrating on offering small grants (below 100,000 Yuan) to nation wide grassroots ENGOs and SEAs;
- "GEF NGO Network", sponsored by GEF to help to found a forum for China's NGOs (2002/2005).

Other projects of FON were also partly or fully supported by international funds. The "Antelope Automobile" education project started in 2003 was sponsored by German "Save Our Future" Foundation and helped by the Swedish Embassy in Beijing and Oxfam (Hong Kong office); the "Wild Horse Automobile" education project received support from "Unilever", etc.[76]

Fourth, the above programs constituted a part of the movement of "capacity building of NGOs", which emerged in recent years and sought to promote the organizational professionalization of NGOs. Like FON, almost all leading NGOs in Beijing involved in this movement and sponsored training programs for nation wide small-scale NGOs in favour of building transparent financial institutions and improving their capacities in fund-raising,[77]such as CANGO (China Association for NGO Cooperation), IED (Institute of Environment and Development) and China NPO Network (CYDF). Then, the terminology of "capacity building of NGOs" was one that most often appeared in NGO's publications and heard during the field investigations.

In short, the above stakeholder relations frame an external structure of governance of FON through which FON has successfully gained social resource and official/societal recognition as

[76] Collected from *FON Newsletter*(*Ziran zhi You Tongxun*), 2001-2004.

[77] They are as follows in turn:VTC (Vision Training Centre, 2002-2006, sponsored by the German Church Development Service Agency) and "NGO Financial Capacity and Auditing Support Project" of CANGO;
SENGO (Strengthening ENGOs in China, sponsored by Holland Embassy in Beijing) of IED, and LEAD-China's Training Program of NGOs (11 rounds up to May 2005, sponsored by London-based LEAD), launched in 1993 as the predecessor of IED;
"Network Marketing of NPO" training program of China NPO Network (December 2004 and March 2005, sponsored by British Council).

follows: (1) richness in nation-wide membership networks; (2) relying heavily on international sponsorship; then (3) becoming an important stakeholder of China's government in the field of environmental protection. They account for the limited innovations of NGOs in terms of volunteerism, non-profitness, and official recognition respectively.

4.1.1.2 Organizational Defects of FON

On the other side, the problems of FON's organizational performance were largely ignored over the past few years. In fact, FON's "legality" as an officially recognized "second-level legal person of social association" is often overlooked by the observer, and involves more like an indigenous institutional obstacle for further legitimation. As I observed from the investigation, FON lacks incentives in organizational capacity building, and relies heavily on Liang's personal reputation.

Passive role of Advisory Board of FON

Within FON's organizational structure, the Advisory Board of FON amassed quite a number of prominent Chinese intellectuals, varying from over 30 members in early times to 12 members at present. They rarely participated in FON's everyday work and policy-decision, except at the annual meetings since March 1995.[78] The office director of FON verified that,

> "the board plays a nearly insignificant role in FON's running, neither producing any important policy…Even board members don't know each other, especially those remote members…To deal with daily decision-making, there is a small group consisting of Liang, Yang and someone else who meet every week…therefore regarding many issues related with FON's future development and reform, we have no clear idea or plan." [79]

In FON's management, according to the interview with Zhang Jilian, it is an informal panel who actually acted as decision mechanism; as a result, even FON's staff reported that they knew, but did

[78] Ibid.

[79] Ibid.

"not really recognize" the organizational crisis which arose from the absence of an Advisory Board in practice .[80]

Nevertheless, we are not talking about conflicting interest between board and staff members, or using criteria of due responsibilities for a legal social association in China, or the counterpart widely accepted in the West for a non-profit organization (e.g. "ten basic responsibilities of nonprofit board" cited by Anheier (2005:232)). Rather, the talks of FON's staff point to a gap between management expectation and the absence of the board's accountability.

X-efficiency

The NGO Center of Tsinghua University has mentioned the x-efficiency of FON that the day-to-day management "was lacking regulation and clearly-defined management institutions…lacking long-term planning…consequentially, despite the fact that FON has expanded in scale, range and influence, it is still bound to the early model, lacking plausible improvement and innovation" (Wang et al., 2000: 176).

Liang himself also mentioned this management problem in early 2002.[81] By 2004, the low efficiency of FON was still one of the most often heard complaints in interviews with other ENGOs especially those small ENGOs. For example, Shen, an experienced FON's volunteer and currently a full-time deployed staff of Green-Web, verified that there was somehow chaos in FON's management system during the time she serviced for FON; even after she left for another

[80] Ibid. See also interview with Li Jian, a full-time deployed social worker of FON, on April 19, 2004.

According to the widely-accepted criteria in international NGOS, a board of directors of an NGO usually involves accountabilities in eight aspects: financial management, planning, programme resource development (fund raising), human resource management, information management, marketing, and public relations and governance (board affairs). See the homepage of the Japan-based "The Global Development Research Center", online document, available at: http://www.gdrc.org/ngo/start-ngo/startngo-3.html.

Analogously, see also "Ten Basic Responsibilities of Nonprofit Boards", in Anherier (2005: 232).

[81] See Liang's "Annual Report of FON's Advisory Board, 2002 (自然之友理事会工作报告,2002)" in January 2002, online document, available at: http://www.fon.org.cn/index.php?id=2785.

NGO (Green-Web), efforts were continually made to deal with this problem when engaged with FON.[82]

Swinging between membership, voluntary association and foundation

As mentioned above, after FON became a leading ENGO in China, INGOs turned to FON for the cooperation in distributing international funds to nation wide grassroots NGOs. The cooperative programs actually located in the centre of FON's missions, and raised a puzzling question that was confronted by FON's staff in everyday work: How could FON balance such foundation-like projects and associational work?

For the interviewed staff of FON, those foundation-like projects did rely on FON's member/volunteer networks, but these networks had being weakened by less attention and chaotic management, partly because FON's board had not shown intention to face the high-level risk in recruiting more members nationwide for many years.[83] Nevertheless, "they did know FON should have transformed, when they were confronting the trade-off choice: to be an agent of international foundations or incubator-like NGO, or to remain the membership-based voluntary association" (Wang et al., 2000).

In short, in the perspective of the governance structure, the organizational professionalization of FON remains far from complete. For FON, the social innovation (namely the public-benefit-oriented mission) and associated social influence depends mainly on its stakeholder complex rather than the capacity-building-oriented organizational professionalization. The capacity-building movement of China's NGOs in which FON centres the fund-distribution of various programs eventually leads to such an ironical outcome.

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[82] See interview with Shen Xu, the only full-time deployed staff of Green-Web, a small grassroots ENGO in Beijing, on April 14, 2004

[83] Supra note 32. Also, such a swinging between different organizational directions was reflected in the fact that Mr. Xue Ye was selected as new general secretary by FON's advisory board in August 2004 without any background or experience in environmental protection. His outstanding capacity in social marketing seemed to be the only stake to account for the decision of FON's advisory board. (Mr. Xue launched and manages a famous private bookstore in Guizhou province since 1993.)

4.1.2 The Rising of Social Professionalism

In general, there are two indicators available to measure social professionalism: the proportion of professional social workers among all social workers, and the proportion of professional social workers among all leaders of NGOs.

Whilst the former seems contradictory to the volunteerism, the latter, according to Baroker (1973), properly indicates the mature degree of social professionalism. During the beginning stage "from voluntary association to welfare state" at the end of the 19th century, Baroker found 14% of CSO leaders were professional social workers that should be a turning point toward state-centred institutionalization of the social service sector.

Likewise, among 30 qualified NSOs (of the 36 samples in total — three house-owners association, two clubs and one association in preparation are ignored), as many as 20 NSOs are chaired by professional social-work leaders. That is to say, except FON and five virtual organizations and four student associations, all leaders of investigated NSOs are professional social workers. Since the second half of 2004, even FON began to set a general secretary position as a substitute for a presidential system which required a sufficiently professional background in the NGO field (see following Table 4.1).

Compared with the SOs, where "quite a lot of leader posts of national SOs are simultaneously held by Party-governmental officials"[84] and "Party-governmental cadres simultaneously hold leader posts of over half local SOs (53.5%)" (Wang et al., 2004a), there is a larger basis of social professionalism in NSOs relating directly to the high proportion of professional social-worker leaders (67%).

Firstly, these professional social work leaders of NGOs can be properly understood as a part of a larger group, namely the "professional social activists" of NSOs. They are not limited to formal

[84] See "The Report of Annual Examining of National SOs (2003)" (2003 年度全国性社会团体年度检查工作报告总结) of MCA, available at: http://www.chinanpo.gov.cn/web/showBulltetin.do?id=18067&dictionid=1721

NGOs and leaders, but range across almost all kinds of NSOs, especially Internet-based NSOs. In some instances, they act as employees of NSOs or "professional volunteers", such as Hu Jia, Song Xinake, Han Tao, Wen Bo, Gao Tian, Du Yilong, Wang Yi and Wen Kejian.

NSO	Leader	Pro.	NSO	Leader	Pro.
Alasan Society Entrepreneur & Ecology (SEE)	Yang Ping (Secretary General)	P	China Development Brief (Beijing, 1996)	Nick Young	P/J
FON (Beijing, 1994/1993)	Liang Congjie (president), Xue Ye (G.E., since 2004)	P	Grassroots Community Association (Shanghai, 2001)	Xu Zhenjun (G.E.)	P/L
GGF (Global Greengrants Fund, Beijing Office, 2000)	Wen Bo	P/E	Guangdong Humanistic Association (Guangzhou, 2003)	Song Xianke	P/L
Global Village (Beijing, 1996)	Liao Xiaoyi	P/E	Panyu Worker Documentary Service (Guangzhou, 1998)	Zeng Feiyang	P/L
Green Peace (Beijing office,1997)	Dr. Liao Hongtao	P/E	The Institute of Contemporary Observation(Shenzhen)	Dr.Liu Kaiming	P
Xinjiang Conservation Fund (Beijing)	Wen Bo	P/E	Beijing Aizhixing Public Health Education Institute (Beijing, 2002)	Wang Yanhai	P
Green Camel (Ruoergai, Sichuan, 2002)	Rao Yong	P/E	Lovesource(Aiyuanhui, Beijing, 2004)	Hu Jia	P
Green Web (Beijing, 1998)	Shen Xu	P/E	Constitutional Politics E-forum (Xianzheng Lunheng)	Wang Yi	E/L
Green Student Forum (Beijing, 1996)	Bai Yunwen(2004)	S	Light of Hope	Shen Yachuan	J
Green Stone Association (Nanjing, 2000)	Fan Xin	S	Beiwang Economics E-forum (1998)	Ben Li	
Green Stone Fund (Nanjing, 2003)	Wang Yao etc.	S	GuantianTeehouse E-forum/Saloon (Beijing,Shanghai,Hangzhou, Xi'an,Chengdu)		
SENOL (Beijing, 1994)	N.A.	P/S	Democracy and Freedom E-forum	N.A.	
Green Camp (1996)	Tang Xiyang	S/E	Furun Jiayuan HO (Beijing,2004)	N.A., Li Jinchun	
Green Beijing (Beijing, 1998)	Song Xinzhou	P/E	Huilongguan HOC (Beijing, 2004)	Nie Hailiang	
Green Roots & Power (Shanghai, 2004)	Qu Dong	P/L	Huaqing Jiayuan HOC (Beijing,2003)	N.A.,	
Open Constitution Initiative Center (Beijing, 2003)	Xu Zhiyong etc.	P/L	China Wuxue Association (preparatory)	Teng Jian	P
Promotion Instutute of Public Quality Education in Health Environment (Beijing, 2004)	Han Tao	P	Harley Motorcycle Rider Club (Beijing)	Qin Huan	P
Cathay Institute for Public Affairs (Beijing, 2002)	Dr. Liu Junning	P	Fanhall (Beijing,2001)	Zhu Rikun	P

Table 4.1: List of investigated NSOs and leaders
Note: P expresses professional leader, S expresses student association, E expresses environmental activists, L expresses lawyers or jurists, G.E. expresses General Secretary, J expresses journalists.

Secondly, the rise of new professionalism in 1990s' Chinese society also influences the social professionalism of NSOs. Among the professional social work leaders in Table 4.1, these professional social workers are derived from the following fields: 6 from lawyers/jurists, 8 environmental activists, 1 HIV/AIDS experts, and 2 journalists. They represent the professional background of the social workers of these civil rights organizations, ENGOs, HIV/AIDS aid organizations, and the like. Moreover, except for one who was a short-term college educated, all the

other NSO workers had at least a bachelor's degree before they began their social work (movement) career. And most of them had over five-year experience in the social work field. Only two social workers had less than three-year experience (Chen Hentao and Yu Jie).

Thirdly, except for those student associations and internet-based organizations, all interviewed NSOs reported that they had at least one full-time deployed employee, like the small-scale ENGO Green-Web. Vis-à-vis the situation that most of local SOs are unable to afford minimized positions of full-time employees (see Wang, Liu, Zhao, Deng, 2004a), these NSOs show better in recruiting full-day employees and maintaining relatively high-level salary in the cities of China.

Fourthly, among the above samples, the 6 lawyers/law-workers are from various "asserting rights NSOs" (including GDHA). And most of the leaders of those rights NSOs have education of law or jurisprudence or are currently legal professionals, except Liu Kaiming the launcher of ICO and former journalist who has a PhD degree in histology. Among all NSOs, the "asserting rights NSOs" are nevertheless a new kind of NSOs that reach the highest level of social professionalism.

Fifthly, being an environmental activist perhaps does not necessarily mean a real profession in China. Almost all environmental activists reported that they had never been trained before entering this field, and most of those prominent environmental activists who founded the ENGOs take environmental protection or ENGO only as their second career, although quite a number of professional social workers (leaders) in other fields indeed began with environmental protection.[85]

[85] Supra note 32, and interview with Rao Yong, one of founders of Green Camel.

Such cases include Wang Yongchen and Hao Bing: Wang, a journalist of Radio Beijing (The Central Broadcasting Station of China), launched "Green Earth Volunteers" (*Lü Jia Yuan*, "attached" to an official Environment Protection Foundation in China) in 1996 and developed to over 30 thousand nationwide volunteers in environmental protection; Hao, a teacher at Beijing Normal University and a key organizer/project manager of FON up to 2003, established an education NGO named "Beijing Brooks Education Centre" (The Institute of *Tian Xia Xi*) in June 2003.

Han Tao and Hu Jia, who began NSO career from FON in the field of environmental protection, eventually established their own NSOs in fields of public education (Han Tao) and HIV/AIDS (Hu Jia) after some years.

To sum up, while China's new professionals are changing the status quo of politics,[86] the rising professionalism that emerges from NSOs and differentiates themselves from conventional SOs, particularly in two aspects: the stakeholder structure and professional social-worker leaders (activists). Nevertheless, above investigation involves a tendency of lowly-institutionalization: while the high proportion of professional social-work leaders suggests a relative highly maturation of NSOs according to Baroker (1973), the lowly intention of institutionalization and the governance defects of FON implies a limited effect imposed by the organizational professionalization. That is to say, the professionalism of NSOs as a specific deorganization attempt (relative to SOs) has seemingly led to the self-deorganization of NSOs to some extent.

4.2 The Platformalization of NSOs

In fieldwork, the term "Platform" was among those words to be heard with high frequency by NSO workers. No matter whether in their oral narratives or publications, the construction of various platforms, namely platformalization, appears to be at the centre of their everyday work and strategy design, as if an objectified carrier by which they can involve the society.

Steered by the capacity-building movement which is proposed by INGOs to improve social accountability and social marketing, the term platform used by investigated NGO workers seems to be a vague concept without specific forms but close to a non-organizational functioning carrier for NGOs' action and communication, through which the actors of specific target groups congregate or integrate and the NGOs accomplish their missions.

In the perspective of governance structure and process, one can roughly distinguish the platforms as externally and internally oriented platforms. The externally oriented platform refers to those platforms favouring external stakeholders, e.g. media, students, governments, or the public. The internal counterpart is used to serve intra stakeholders, including training programs, fund

[86] See Carol Lee Hamrin (2002).

distribution programs, and inner forum/e-forum/print media. According to specific functions and visible forms, the platforms can be categorized into four types as follows.

4.2.1 Four Types of Platforms

4.2.1.1 Training Programs as Platform

Widely used by all sorts of NSOs, various training programs are most easily to be observed inside China's NSO sector, especially within the leading NGOs.

> ***IED*** (Institute of Environment and Education, Beijing), with three regular training programs: "LEAD (China) program", an annual program targeting China's NGOs, 11 rounds since 1994; China's version of the LEAD program, a bi-annual program, 6 rounds since November of 2002; "NGO Capacity Building", an annual program sponsored by Holland Embassy Beijing, 2 rounds since December 2002. Besides these training programs, IED also helps other NGOs in constructing Internet homepages.
>
> ***CANGO*** (Beijing), one of the largest semi-official NGOs in China with up to 115 institutional members in early 2004 and 29 international cooperation partners, organized, on 16 occasions, various training programs during the two years (2003-04).
>
> ***China NPO Network*** (Beijing), organized 2 rounds of a "Network Marketing of NPO" training program in December 2004 and March 2005. Both were sponsored by the British Council, still targeting China's NPOs. In particular, this China NPO Network *per se* as a platform constructed by CYDF may be considered an attempt by CYDF to improve its reputation within China's NGO sector, which has been seriously damaged by financial scandal since 2002.

Even amongst those small-scale NSOs, we find strong intentions to organize training platforms. The Green Students Forum, for instance, viewing itself as a communicative platform bridging 130 student environmental associations in total, has also accomplished an annual training program

entitled "Environmental Student Volunteers Training Program" and since January of 2004, cooperated with 40 partner students associations and sponsored by GGF. For the Green Student Forum, such sponsorship is almost the only source sustaining its running cost and its primary mission – a weekly forum for environmental student associations in Beijing.[87]

As a measurable result, every full-time employee I interviewed reported that they had participated at least once in such a training program in recent years. For the participants, these training programs have more use in building personal connections and gaining recognition by other NSOs than the training per se.[88]

4.2.1.2 Forums (e-forums) as Platform

Various forums are those meetings points regularly held or supported by NSOs in recent years. For them, such platforms are mainly used to form public discourse and communication within a certain field and precise targeting of people – journalists, governmental officials, INGOs, and NSO members (see following Table 4.2).

It should be noted, compared with the "Saloons" which once prevailed in the 1980's public life in urban China, the "forums" are more institutionalised, with formal titles and regular meeting places and financial supports. In the long run, they may deepen public discourse by virtue of media and networking effects, thus enlarge social influence even on governmental policy decision of both forums and NSOs, as the previous case of FON showed.[89] (See following Table 4.2)

In fact, Table 4.2 represents perhaps only a tip of the iceberg. Among those influential forums in the so-called NGO circle in Beijing, besides "IEF NGO Forums" which are hosted by leading NGOs in turn, there are still some platforms organized by small-scale NSOs or even individuals.

---

[87] Cf. interview with Bai Yunwen, who beard the director of Green Students Forum at the time, on April 10, 2004.

[88] See interview with Chen Hentao, a full-day employee of "Panyu Worker Documentary Service"—a small-scale labour rights NSO, on May 21, 2004.

[89] It is the very purpose these NSOs intended and have stated in their documents; these effects are also verified by Yu Jie (Greenpeace) and Liao Xiaoyi in interviews.

NSO	Forums	Targeting Group	NSO	Forums	Targeting Group
CANGO	Non-scheduled but frequent various forums	NGOs and the public	**IOC**	Irregular meetings on labour rights	Labour rights NSOs, scholars, and international partners
FON	IEF NGO Forum (2002)	NGOs	**Grassroots Community Association (Shanghai)**	SHYMCA Tea Saloon (irregular bi-weekly)	The public
IED	LEAD Forum for Sustainable Development	NGOs and Scholars	**Unirule Economic Institute**	Bi-weekly economic forum	The public and academic
Global Village	IEF NGO Forum (1999); Environmental Forum for Journalists	NGOs, Journalists, governmental officials	**China Research Center for Public-Private Partnerships**	Monthly PPP forum (four times in 2004)	The public and governmental officials
China NPO Network	NPO Forum (5 times since 2003)	NSOs and governmental officials	**Open Constitution Initiative (Beijing)**	Forum of "We are people's representatives" (six times in second half of 2004)	The public and students
Green Student Forum (Beijing)	Green Space Forum (weekly)	Environmental Students,Associations in Beijing	**Guantian Teehouse Saloon (Chengdu)**	Irregular "constitutional Saloon"	The public and internet activists
Panyu Worker Documentary Service	Mainly participate at various forums nation wide		**Guantian Teehouse Saloon (Shanghai)**	Monthly Saloon at Jing'an Park	The public and internet activists
Green Earth Volunteer	Journalist Saloon (monthly)	Journalists	**Guantian Teehouse Saloon (Beijing)**	Bi-weekly Saloon at San Wei Bookstore	The public and internet activists

Table 4.2: List of forum platforms
Source: Publications and homepages of above NSOs, and interviews.

For example, the BINGO (Beijing Integrated NGO Support Forum), a bi-monthly regularly gathering in the past few years at Pass-By bar and elsewhere in some cases, was organized by David Joiner and his friends in Beijing's NSOs who did so without sponsorship. In addition to the owner of Pass-By bar offering place of his free will and a number of NSO websites broadcasting news of each action, it also attracted related participants from a broad range. At an ordinary gathering on 13 April 2004, for instance, among over 30 participants, there included representative of Misereor Foundation, the director of Half the Sky Foundation, a project manager of EU-China Training Program on Village Governance (an GONGO), two staff members of China International Culture Exchange Center (an official "affair unit" seeking to build connections with NGOs), one manager of Cohesion company (disability related), volunteers of Green-Web and Green Students Forum, and some ordinary young office workers, etc. They reported that they did not care the question whether or not BINGO was a formal organization. Rather, this platform provided the chance for those individuals to contact various NGOs, and for those organizational representatives it was a

rare channel by far to seek potential partners and sponsors.[90] It is the very purpose that BINGO's launcher intended, although it appeared more like a bi-product of the current dilemma of China's NGO sector – the dependence on international funds.

Also, the e-forum (online discussion group) provides a cheap platform facilitating two-way communication between NSOs and a giant pool of Internet users. Among the 36 interviewed NSOs in total, there are over one third NSOs (14) whose e-forums are embedded into their organizational structure, or vice versa – the platform *per se* represents the organizational entity in the real world for some ones. In particular, some of these are totally "platformalized" or even "virtualized", such as Light of Hope, Green-Beijing, Green-Stone, and some loosely-organized e-forum saloons (informal NSOs).

Due to such a prominent advance in technology and communications, Greenweb (www.green-web.org), an e-forum founded in 1999 by Gao Tian who was a volunteer for environmental protection at that time, launched and maintained an e-forum (platform) based unregistered membership organization for over eight years. It has generated networks with several hundred environmental activists over the years and has had a six-member board of directors since 2003, currently concentrating on offering technological and financial support for the homepage construction of other NGOs. Information was collected by cross-investigation in fieldwork and irrespective of whether it was Gao's view (and Greenweb's volunteers/members) or sourced from other ENGOs. The opinion is that they all take it for granted the fact that Greenweb is a grassroots ENGO, and so does Greenweb's project entitled "Supporting Internet Capacity Building for Grassroots NGOs".

Following Greenweb's mode, the Nanjing-based unregistered student association Green Stone has created an analogous platform/informal-organization in late 2004 called GSEAN favouring the

[90] Cf. interviews with Li Da and Yu Zhou, and some informal interviews, carried out on April 13, 2004 at Pass-By bar in Beijing. See also news of GGF, still about a time of BINGO's action on March 9, 2004, available at: http://www.greengrants.org.cn/poster/show.php?id=118.

Internet-based construction of students environmental associations. It is similar but differed in target group from another early project carried out by IED – one of the leading Beijing-based NGOs. The platform involved here proves again that it could survive and be recognized as an organizational entity, provided that there is a widely-recognized platform – as though for them, the legal registration as a recognized SA is nothing but merely a platform. Whether it is a platform or a formal NGO seems to be meaningless for participants, hence the boundary between platform and organization is blurred, i.e. the de-organization of NSOs.

4.2.1.3 Conventional Media as a Platform

Print media, as a conventional communication tool, is of course highly valued and utilized by NSOs. In practice, such platforms are observed that usually take the form of a newsletter circulated to members, or functioning as a gift magazine to related institutions, or other printed matters for promotion. Almost all such print magazines are of non-profit but "illegal publications" if taken according to China's restrictive regulation of publications.

In the case of GGF's (China) small grant program in 2004, relative to 6 internet-related platforms/projects granted that year, ten NSOs were sponsored by GGF for their conventional-media-based platforms/projects (amounting from 350 to 5000 U.S. Dollars for each one): China Development Brief, Green China, Anhui Federation for University Student Environmental Groups, Wild Bird Society of Dalian, Dabieshan Green Brigade, Green Union of Harbin Institute of Technology, No Nuke Asia Forum, Environmental Education Center of Ili Normal University, Community Action and Shanghai Green Student Forum.[91]

Nevertheless, even though print media for Chinese NSOs are relatively expensive and highly-risky, one can still find a successful case – the Chinese Development Brief that was founded by Nick Young (a former journalist) in 1996, as a bilingual magazine, concentring on collecting all related information about China's NGOs. It was not a registered legal publication but recognized as

[91] See GGF's annual report, online document, available at: http://www.greengrants.org.cn/read.php?id=7.

a formal NGO by other NGO workers. By 2004, it had published two reports: *200 International NGO in China (1999)* and *250 Chinese NGOs: Civil Society in the Making (2002)*, and built a complete network among Chinese NSOs through their print platform.

4.2.1.4 Fund Distribution as Platform

In addition to the above training and communicative platforms, I observed the latest development – there were increasing NSOs that turn to fund-distribution-related projects. Despite the international foundations (e.g. WWF, GGF) and domestic official foundations (e.g. official CYDF and China Poverty Alleviation Foundation, etc), those local NGOs, like FON, Green Earth Volunteers (GEV, 绿家园) and CANGO, also turned to construct distribution platforms of small grants program in recent years. For them, these platforms are actually a distribution channel of INGOs programs, such as FON's "Missereor Small Grant Program" (i.e. Dandelion Project by FON, set forth in 2003) and GEV's small grant program which cooperated with an international "Virtual Fund" association. Nevertheless, these platforms are directly challenging the institutional constraints that any fund distribution of unregistered foundations is illegal, according to Article 40 of China's Foundation Regulations.

But this development even extended to some small informal NGOs. On the basis of 5000 US Dollars they raised from GGF's small grant program, three graduate students of Green Stone Association (a student environmental association) launched a small foundation "Green Stone Fund" in 2003, aiming to offer small grants for nation-wide student environmental associations. In this case, the platform of fund distribution *per se* totally replaced the organization, for the Green Stone Fund had not registered or been granted by the authority.

Only developed to 2004, China's NGOs saw a significant change there emerged the a fund distribution platform that totally depended on local resource and and organized by a local NGO—Alashan Association. As the first "self-organized fund-distribution-purposed local ENGO" in China, this platform—the SEE Foundation, Society Entrepreneur Ecology—launched in early

2005 raises fund totally from the members of Alashan Association—about 100 Chinese private entrepreneurs by 2006. As a rare civic public-benefit registered foundation, it promised in 2006 to pool 2.5 million Yuan grants per year for the use of sponsoring small NGOs in China.

4.2.2 The Formation of NSO Networks

Having examined various platforms and concrete cases, the platformalization move of NSOs could be characterized as the process that specific platforms are created, maintained, and routinized in which the knowledge flow, information flow and fund flow are organized by the web constructed by various platforms.

That is the very point emphasized by the NSO workers interviewed, through which these platforms are distinguished from other projects and then the boundary between platform and organization even makes no sense for those platform-based NSOs, provided that the construction of specific platforms can be recognized by other NSOs especially those INGOs.

The platformalization thus plays a twofold role in practice: functioning as a network mediate between international resource and local resource, on which INGOs and local NSOs inter-dependently rely during fund distribution and knowledge diffusion; and thus translating network into an identity politics of NSOs by means of knowledge diffusion.

Therefore, the increasing platformalization of China's NSOs can be divided into two levels of movement: the network construction and diffusion mechanism. The network formation during the platformalization of NSOs is hypothesized to centre the process of NSOs' structuration, and can be visualized by introducing the approach of SNA (social network analysis). The diffusion mechanism is to be explored in a further chapter.

4.2.2.1 Visualizing Social Networks of NSOs

This section, first of all, is to visualize a social diagram of the networks (clusters) of NSOs by means of the widely-used computational software "Pajek".[92] Strictly speaking, this tool of SNA is descriptive and confined to visualizing the whole network and then characterizing the network features, rather than used to develop an SNA model.

In short, after inputting data of 40 NSOs, I let Pajek compute and freely export in two-dimensional (2D) layout, and then draw out a social diagram of investigated NSOs. (See Figure 4.2)

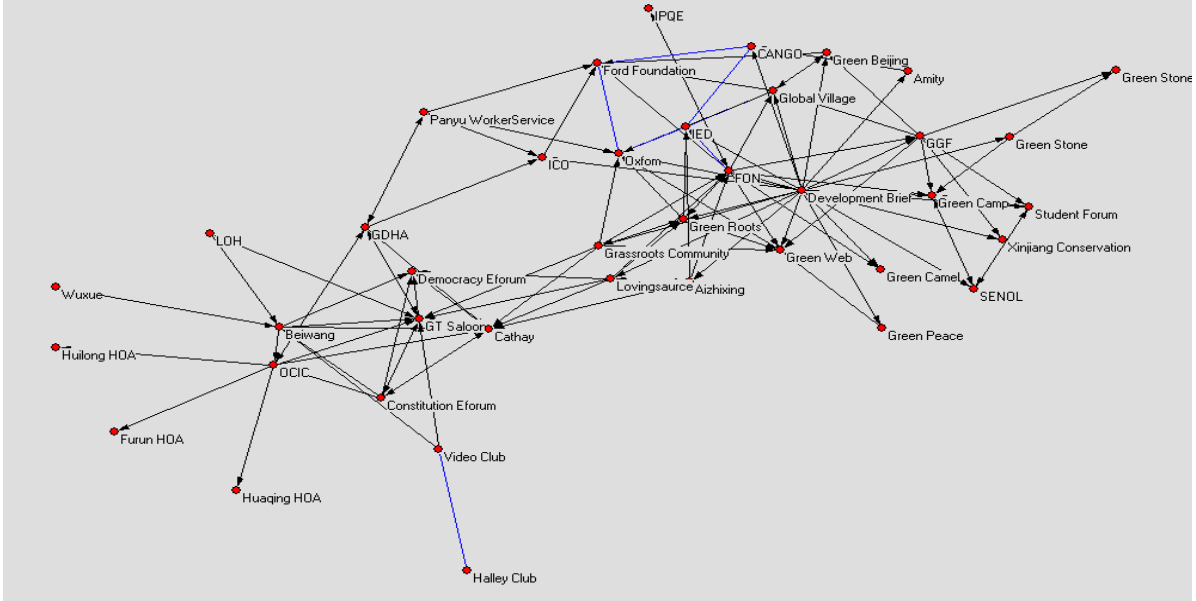

Figure 4.2: The social diagram of NSO network.
Source: The data were mainly collected from interviews, partly from online documents and NSO publications as indirect evidence (see Appendix II), and visualized by Pajek 1.01.
Note: Black line expresses arc, blue line expresses edge, the arrow expresses direction of line (the flow in the real world).

To visualize the above social diagram, the data of inter-connections were mainly collected from online documents and print publications of investigated NSOs. Interviews offered cross-verification for this information. It is also what Batageli and his colleagues emphasized during their

[92] Pajek, the word for spider in Slovenian, a Windows compatible and JAVA-based software developed by Vladimir Batagelj and Andrej Mrvar since 1996, was specifically devised to process large social network data. Its latest version "Pajek 1.01" is applied in this study to draw social diagrams and calculate basic network features. See Vladimir Batagelj, et al. (2005).

SNA studies. Using Pajek, a vertex denotes an NSO unit, and a vector represents a weighted link to a vertex in a network. Each link (an arc connecting two vertices) is based on reported organizational connections and believable personal ties. The detailed properties of each connection/arc are listed in Appendix II, together with the source code file of visualization in form of a Pajek file.

4.2.2.2 The Internal-Differentiation of NSOs' Structure

At first glance, this graph appears to be structured at four levels:

- The first level is made up of two clusters: the ENGOs group in the right half, and e-forum-intellectual groups in the left side, where China Development Brief and Guan Tian e-forum locate the centre of each local network alternatively. They are the only two centres reported by Pajek. This has special significance for the structuring of NSOs, that is, the information flow, especially the internet communication, has essentially changed the structure of other flows;
- In the middle of these two local networks, there are a few "asserting rights NSOs" bridging ENGOs and more or less politicized liberal NSOs. Given that this network is not strongly connected as Pajek reported, this kind of NSO highlights the bridge role between the above two different groups, either in the sense of organizational connection in a network or in the sense of organizational evolution in network growth;
- Some other INGOs (including IED with a strong international background), like Ford Foundation and Oxfam, locate on the periphery of the network but parallel with the core cluster constituted by FON, Global Village and China Development Brief;
- Much more grassroots NSOs range at the edge of the network, acting as the mediate between the public and the NSO sector.

Therefore, an internal differentiation within NSOs' structure emerges from the social diagram of NSOs: The rightist sub-graph of mature well-developed network of NGOs, appears in a three-layer

hierarchical structure along fund flow. The top layer is of INGOs; the second layer consists of those leading NGOs; and the third level was constituted by numerous grassroots NGOs.

In fieldwork, quite a number of those formal NGOs, mainly ENGOs, reported they had accepted direct sponsorship from and "relied deeply on" international organizations while there were very limited donations available from China's society in recent years (see Table 4.3). No wonder, it is the very structure of resource dependence and dependence relations – a few INGOs locate at the top positions of the pyramid, and function as "prestige leaders" feeding the rightist sub-structure by virtue of the downward flows of the fund, information, and knowledge as the platformalization move of NSOs revealed.

Chinese local NGOs	Sponsoring INGOs (incomplete list)	The proportion of accepted donation in total fund
Green Beijing	"Environmental Prize" of Ford Foundation	N.A.
Greenstone (and Greenstone Fund)	GGF	App. 100%
Green Web	GGF	N.A.
Global Village(2004)	Ford Foundation, Boell Foundation (Germany), CEPF, IEF (USA), WWF, etc.(over 50 institutions)	App. 100%
Xinjiang Conservation Fund	GGF	100%
AZX	Democracy Foundation, Open Society Institute, Sidaction Foundation, British Embassy Beijing, etc	App. 100%
China Development Brief (2002)	Kadoorie Foundation, Ford Foundation, Trace Foundation, Rockefeller Bros. Fund.	App. 100%
Greenroots & Power	Oxfam	N.A.
ICO	Ford Foundation, Nike company	App. 100%
FON	Ford Foundation, GGF, Oxfam, Misereor, etc.	91.8%
Amity Foundation	American Baptist Church, etc. (over 120 institutions)	Over 90%
CANGO	Ford Foundation	Over 90%
China Green Student Forum	GGF	100%

Table 4.3: International sponsors and funds(%) of some NSOs interviewed
Source: Collected and processed from NSO publications, online documents and interviews of related NSOs.[93]

Ironically, until the new regulation ("Administrative Measure of Foundations") was enacted in 2004, Chinese social associations had been banned from accepting overseas aids during the last two decades, according to the regulations of SOs and foundations. This new regulation thus can be seen

[93] Amity Foundation, available at: http://www.amityfoundation.org.cn/about03.asp;
CANGO, available at: http://www.cango.org/cnindex/lunwen/02.htm ;
China Development Brief, available at: http://www.chinadevelopmentbrief.com/page.asp?sec=5&sub=3&pg=0;
AZX, available at: http://www.aizhi.net/index.asp?action=article_Show&ArticleID=444;
Global Village, available at: http://www.gvbchina.org.cn/zhichi/cengjing.php;
FON, available at: http://www.fon.org.cn/index.php?id=2785.

as a codified institutionalization, nevertheless still very limited, of the innovations of China's NGOs, although it does not necessarily imply it is a result of the political process that the NGOs lobbied legislators within the framework of Chinese "coordinating politics".

4.2.2.3 The Heterarchical Structure of e-forum-based NSOs

Strikingly, the left sub-graph of those newly emerged e-forum-based informal NSOs and liberal intellectual organizations, appears to have a non-hierarchy structure, more like the "heterarchical structure" in Kyriakos Kontopoulos' terminology – a partially nested structure. "In which there is no single governing level; to the contrary, various levels exert a determinate influence on each other in some particular respect…involve multiple access, multiple linkages, and multiple determinations" (Kontopoulos, 1993: 55). This heterarchical sub-structure has theoretically changed the nature of the whole structure of NSOs.

The values of two functions and their network centrality also indirectly indicate the being of a "poly-centric" structure. The first, the "betweenness centrality" $C_B(x)$ is 0.26259,[94] remaining at a low level and implying cetrain problems within the information circulation of the whole NSO network (see also Nooy, Mrvar and Batagelj, 2005: 133). The second value of "closeness centralization" for the whole undirected network only equals 0.33110,[95] offering to some extent another piece of indirect evidence of such non-cohesive structure. The heterarchical structure significantly decreases the centrality of the whole network.

In light of Kontopoulos' "logics of social structure", such structuration can be attributed to two kinds of morphogenetic network growth in addition to ENGO's hierarchical order. One is of

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[94] According to Batagelj et al. (2005), the "Idea of betweenness centrality measures: unit is central, if it lies on several shortest paths among other pairs of units," which was firstly formulated by Freeman (1977).

The function $C_B(x) = c_B(x) / (n - 1)(n - 2)$ represents the relative betweenness centrality of directed networks. The value of $C_B(x)$ should be in between 0 and 1. The software of Pajek is able to compute this function.

[95] Here, we take the value of closeness centrality for "all" network in order to measure the closeness centralization, assuming it is an undirected network.

Batagelj et al. (2005) define the function of closeness centralization as: $C_C = \sum_{X \in E} (C^*_C - C_C(x)) / (n - 1)(n - 2)/(2n - 3)$.

spontaneous organized e-forum-based NSOs. In particular, the GT Saloon for instance, involves a broader and more open resource mobilization, distinguishing their independent move from the hierarchical structure of ENGOs. At this moment, the rise of Internet and Internet-based NSOs may significantly fulfil such structural holes in Burt's terms, thus implying an innovative move—a spontaneous and independent network growing beyond resource dependence upon INGOs (see Figure 4.3).

The other one, the rise of various "asserting rights NSOs", bridges the above two sub-structures – ENGOs and liberal associations. Taking into account the time series, such "local bridges" are formed as a result of the two-way move of ENGOs and e-forum/liberal associations.

Specifically, it is in recent years that Hu Jia turned to the AIDS/HIV field (beginning with Aizhixing and then Loving source) from environmental protection (FON). Two labour rights NGO, ICO and "Panyu Worker Service" founded in 1998 and 2001 in turn, both have close connection with liberal intellectuals in Guangdong province and other NGOs in China. The "Greenroots Commune", concentrating on forging public discourse and offering community-based legal aids all the time, is also influenced by liberal thoughts since the very beginning to the present day, as her launcher and employee reported.[96]

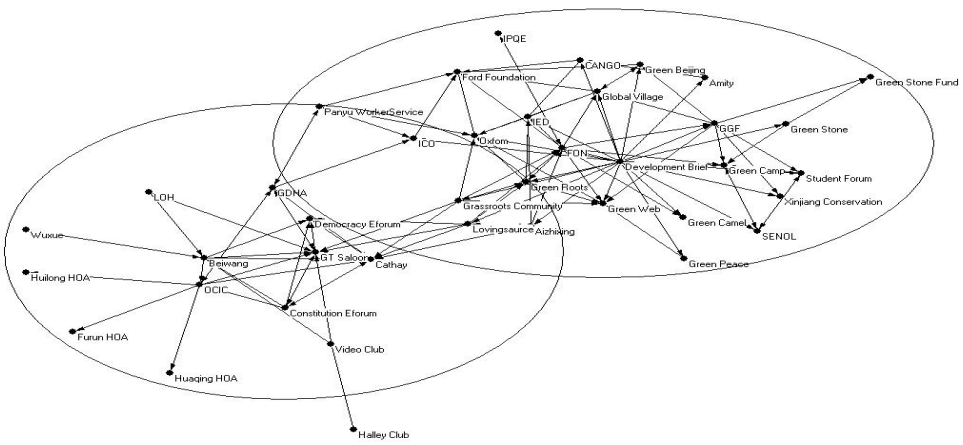

Figure 4.3: Sub-structures of NSO network
Source: Revised from Figure 4.1

[96] Cf. interview with Xu Zhenjun on May 27, 2004, and interview with Qu Dong on April 25, 2004.

In practice, their roles as "bridge NSOs" are also verified by the fact that they are recognized as true NSOs by others within the NGO sector, no matter that stem from neighborhood-based contentions or as the extension of social professionalism of NGOs. In this sense, the network-oriented platformalization namely, as an operative concept for China's NSOs' development in practice, should be defined as an outcome of the deorganization or the de-institutionalization strategy of NGOs (NSOs) as a whole when they are confronting the obstacles during the institutionalization of their early innovations.

4.3 Discussion: the structural transformation of NSOs

To summarize, the NSOs have differentiated themselves from the conventional SOs via the development of social professionalism and platformalization movement. Through which, an independent NSOs' sphere emerges and then re-structures the legitimacy resource of NSOs. This process is also termed by Lin as "institutionalising organizations" (Lin, 2002:194), nevertheless, it eventually appears to be like the "de-institutionalizing" in the contrary.

(1) During the platformalization move, various platforms of NSOs in fact have constructed an explicit network boundary that signals the edge of the NSO sphere. The boundary between NSO and non-NSO is thus equivalent to the boundary of NSO network, functioning as the cognitive boundary of NSOs to differentiate NSOs from conventional SOs.

From the actual function of the inner networks that are used for the social resource flow and human resource flow and capacity-building, it is fair to say that a functionalist identity within NSOs has been constructed. That whether involving this flow network becomes a criterion of NSO, rather than it is granted or recognized by a governmental agency. Even for "public institutions", the China International Culture Exchange Center, for instance, also recognized that involving such

networks should be a necessary condition for transforming into a true NGO.[97] In short, such a network sphere may be the most important structural basis of the legitimation of NSOs.

On the other hand, through these networks, the external stakeholder relation of individual NSOs are integrated and then institutionalized into the whole NGO networks, and thus one can find the "prestige leaders" emerging from the hierarchic structure of NGOs. It functions in practice as another structural basis for the external legitimation of NGOs:

- By mediate of the leading NGOs as "prestige leaders" or watchdogs during the processes of resource distribution and "capacity evaluation", the local NGOs, nevertheless mostly remaining unregistered, can be recognized and sponsored by INGOs. Then, the consumer-control mechanism in Rose-Ackerman and James's (1986) sense of non-profitness also functions in China.
- Those watchdog (leading) NGOs, on the other side, also gain increasing stakes derived from their structural positions as "prestige leaders" during the negotiation or cooperation with the government in recent years.[98]

(2) The heterarchical structure of NSOs emerges from the structuration process of NSOs. Vis-à-vis ENGOs' dependence on INGOs and the hierarchic sub-structure of ENGOs, those e-forum-based NSOs and "asserting rights NSOs" represent an alternative but indigenous morphogenesis of network growth—a decentralized movement and associated "heterarchical" structure, as Figure 4.3 shows.

[97] In the BINGO saloon at PASS-BY bar (see supra note 92), two staff of China International Culture Exchange Center presented there and sought to build connections with other NGOs, according to informal interview with them.

[98] For instance, 30 ENGOs appear in the board of the Chinese Environmental Protection Union (an GONGO), which is launched by the Environment Agency in April 2005. The rest of board members are all ranking officials of the governments (113)

See *Business Week*(Chinese), "Zhongguo NGO yu Zhengfu de Jiemeng (the Coalition of China's NGOs and Governments)", March 28, 2005.

This emergence of the "heterarchical" structure may be regarded as the most significant outcome after I introduce the structural analysis of legitimation process. Viewing the network growth of NSOs as a long-term process, it not only indicates the increasing internal complexity as the response to a hypercomplex environment (Knodt, 1995: xxxv), but also, implies an essential structure/system differentiation that NSOs are developing and structuring as an independent system vis-à-vis the environmental (authoritarian) system. Further structuration is ready to launch.

(3) The platformalization and then the multi-centred structure of NSOs suggest a morphological transformation of the organizational professionalization. That is, from ENGOs to Internet-based NSOs to "asserting rights NSOs", both the governance structure (or stakeholder structure) and direction of these NSOs have changed. It is to be explored in the remainder of the dissertation.

Chapter 5

NSOs AND THE INTERNET

The social construction of identity in the Internet era

> "…wherever there is room for social activity, room is created for a social memory as well. Any society that is alive is a society with a history."
>
> --- Václav Havel, "An Open Letter to Gustav Husák" (1975)

As Chapter 4 shows, the interactions between organization and environment and the innovations of NSOs appear to be "legitimate but not institutionalised".[99] But, the legitimation has taken the specific form of deorganization (also de-institutionalization) of NSOs during the structuration rather than the ultimate institutionalization.

The last ten years have seen the scale of Internet users and the Internet industry in China experienced a dramatic growth of more than 50% per annum. By 1998, China's Internet users reached one million; and by 2005, China become the second largest state of Internet users. This amazing development has impacted upon the everyday life of Chinese citizens. One could view it a large-scale virtual-networks-based "not unreal" community in Castells' sense (Castells, [1996] 2000: 389).

Almost simultaneously, NSOs were heavily influenced by the Internet and co-evolved with it. In many areas, like the formation of e-grassroots, e-civil associations, e-social movements, collective identity, generation reproduction, networking, etc, the evolution of the Internet has basically reshaped the structure of China's NSOs over the past decade.

This chapter then turns to the second modality of the structuration of NSOs – the Internet's networking (see Figure 2.2), exploring how the Internet-based communication (interaction) leads to

[99] See, Pamela S. Tolbert and Lynne G. Zucker (1994).

a twin structuration: the formation of Internet-based NSOs as an external structuration, and the social construction of NSO agents as an internal structuration (namely the self-categorization).

5.1 The Structuration in Cyberspace: an introduction and literature review

Technologically, the Internet has two distinguishing features. Firstly, through the movement of bits and connections of digital wires (or wireless), all computer users (terminators) constitute the physical space and networks. I.e. the Internet is both temporal and spatial, both physical network and cyberspace – originally a term from William Gibsons' science-fiction novel *Neuromancer* (1984). Secondly, the "networking via computers also facilitates communication among a larger number and broader spectrum of individuals, enabling people from different remote locations to associate with each other…to make their opinions matter by having their voices heard" (Saco, 2002: XV).

That is to say, being characterized as a "many-to-many" computer-mediated communication (CMC), the potential revolutionary effects of Internet as an "electronic agora" in Rheingold's phrasing (Rheingold, 1993:14,109) may not be bound to technological advances that the Internet democratizes information by simplifying the creation, duplication, storage, and distribution of data (Saco, 2002: XV) in whatever societies. Rather, in practical societies, "what is historically specific to the new communication system…is not its inducement of virtual reality but the construction of *real virtuality*." (Castells, [1996] 2000:403; Italic added)

In his studies of the rise of network society and global social movements, Castells links the culture of real virtuality with social differentiation and views it as an integration of "a common cognitive pattern", namely the "cultural expressions" of the "virtually perceived" reality (ibid: 402-404). From this view, the concept of the "real virtuality" may rightly characterize the structuration effects of this "virtual community". In relation to Luhmann's theory of

communication and actions, a threefold structural reasoning may support and deepen Castells' observation.

(1) Prior to Luhmann, Michael Polanyi argued in his epistemology of life structure that "all communications form a machine type of boundary, and these boundaries form a whole hierarchy of consecutive levels of action…A boundary condition is always extraneous to the process which it limits." (Polanyi, 1969: 226,227) In general, from the relation between body and space in the cyberspace and physical space, Saco defines it as an alternative social space of a "heterotopia" "as a countersite that challenges the normalized ordering of the spaces to which it relates" (Saco, 2002: XXV; see also Hetherington, 1997). Such a Foucaultian concept referring to the "space of otherness" by which Saco asserts a politics of visibility of the Internet is very similar to Rheingold's "electronic agora".

(2) As Castells observes that the formation of virtual communities is but one of expressions of social differentiation (Castells, [1996] 2000:402), a real communication as the precondition of the identified community boundary "emerges only if this last difference is observed, expected, understood, and used as the basis for connecting with further behaviours... the communication is *possible only as a self-referential process.*" (Luhmann, [1984] 1995:141,143; Italic original) This self-referential nature of communication thus explains Castells' "real virtuality" of Internet space that it is not virtual but a constructed reality, and also connects the communication and further actions by mediate of the boundary between electronic communication and environment through which the social differentiations are introduced and re-constructed.

(3) Furthermore, communication *per se* induces the system differentiation from self-reference to self-autopoiesis, or, vice versa, "the differentiation of social systems can emerge only through the differentiation of communication processes" (Luhmann, [1984] 1995: 152). According to Luhmann, consensus is not necessarily required, on the contrary, "communication transforms the difference between information and utterance (two basic means of communication) into the

difference between acceptance and rejection of the utterance" (ibid: 233). Henceforth, "every assertion provokes its contrary" and then "every communication invites protest" (ibid: 149,148,173). From this point, the self-referential communication system has defined its contesting nature of communicative actions and further contentious structuring.

Specifically, DiMaggio and his colleagues sort current research about "social implications of the Internet" into five domains: 1) inequality (the "digital divide"); 2) community and social capital; 3) political participation; 4) organizations and other economic institutions; and 5) cultural participation and cultural diversity (DiMaggio, Hargittai, Neuman, and Robinson, 2001: 307). Correspondingly, the increasing literature concerning China's Internet in recent years encompasses these theses as follows:

- The "digital divide" (Giese, 2001; Liang & Wei, 2002) as admitted by China's government,[100] was regarded as the "tip of the iceberg" of probable "informational stratification" (Qiu, 2002);
- The emerging online community and "offline gathering" (Wang and He, 2004);
- Regarding the issue of the Internet and civil society, it is no wonder that increasing attention has been paid in terms of its further implications, both inside and outside the academia. Yang (2002) discusses how the Internet is influencing the formation of civil society in China; Kalathil and Boas (2003) noted a "healthy and orderly public sphere" emerges in China's Internet and implies positive impacts on authoritarian rule in the long term; Hughes (2002) linkes the Internet and market development and then extended it to the "virtual nation" (nation building).

Such amazing developments somehow suggest the self-organization within China's cyberspace. The online discussion groups, for instance, being categorized into one of the new social organizations

[100] See *China Daily*, March 20, 2002. According to the report, the Guangdong region accounts for 10.4 percent of total Internet users in China, while Beijing and Shanghai account for 9.8 percent and 9.2 percent respectively. However, the provinces of Qinghai and Ningxia have online populations of just 0.2 and 0.3 percent respectively, while occupied Tibet has just 0.1 percent of Internet users.

indicating "associational revolution" in present-day China by Wang and He (2004), profoundly changed the above landscape of China's Internet.

(4) Political discourse and Internet contentions are among another focus in studies of China's Internet. Liu (1999) addresses the link of Internet and civic discourse; Fung and Kedl (2000/2001) report a case study about political discourse in a Chinese e-forum; Li Xiguang et al. (2003) notice the spill-over effect in how public opinion formed in "Chatrooms" (mainly referring to e-forums in fact) and spread over society and then conventional media. Johan Lagerkvist, a PhD student of Lund University, helds that such emerging online discussion groups are forming Internet public opinion where nationalist movements are cultivated and new opinion leaders came to form. They all support Yang's (2002) point that Chinese Internet users "are engaged in the discursive construction of an online public sphere…ultimately enable Chinese citizens to engage online and off in 'a new type of political action, critical public debate" (Chase and Mulvenon, 2002: 28; Kluver, 2005). In particular, Chase and Mulvenon's report *You've Got Dissent* (2002) lists various forms of "two-way" and "one-way" communications via email, BBS, Chatrooms, and e-magazines; and reported the broadly political use of the Internet by dissidents, students and members of so-called "unsanctioned NGOs" (e.g. Falun Gong and CDP) especially during some remarkable web-based discourses, petitions and political actions since 1996, around "1996 Diaoyu Island protests", the "May 1999 embassy bombing demonstrations", "protests over May 2000 murder of a Beijing University student" and "April 2001 spy plane collision incident, and the "September 11 terrorist attacks".

(5) The last, is whether such online discourse will lead to democratization, as so-called technological utopianism metaphors of "the electronic agora" (Rheingold 1993:14) have suggested since the mid-1990s? Some INGOs like Amnesty International (2002) and OpenNet Initiative (2005) recently reports that "China operates the most extensive, technologically sophisticated, and broad-reaching system" of "state control" over the Internet, calling for people "beyond blind optimism" (Kalathil and Boas, 2003). Therefore despite the hopes of many scholars, pundits and

political scientists in the West, some argue the evidence for such an outcome does not exist, "therefore no reason to believe that the Internet will be the overriding causal factor in the democratization of China" (Peters, 2002).

Nevertheless, Christopher Hughes (2003) reminds us that the sociological inquiry within studies of the Internet should go beyond narrowing questions, like "whether the spread of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) leads to liberal political change". If one takes into account the fact that the Internet is almost the first and only many-to-many communication form that has emerged in authoritarian China in association with the increasing use of computers since the mid-1990s, the proposed concept of "real virtuality" has much richer implications for the ongoing structural transformation of urban space in China.

As we know, despite the earlier profound social change of how the popularization of television reshaped the private life styles of common people in the 1980s when China's Party/state relaxed control over the social and cultural life and displayed a key role in "almost a revolution" in 1989 (Lull, 1991), one can hardly find any other form of many-to-many communication prior to the spread of the Internet.

The Internet proves to be as the only effective communication modality and a novel network structure emerged from China's conventional social life (as well as conventional SOs) and this calls for an overall analysis to explore its "heterotopia" boundary, which is supposed to be an objectified heterarchical structure of NSOs as has been demonstrated earlier. From the above literature, I propose a five-fold system differentiation of Internet during the structuration process of NSOs, in which the Internet network functions as a modality of structuration and displays specific duality of the structure of Internet communication and network: [101]

[101] In current studies of cyber society in the west, "new social formations may require new forms of inquiry" (Jones, 1995:7), and "a sociology of border crossing, of migration across the semi-permeable membranes of social life" (Carey, 1993:179) may centre in cyber society-related studies. Further discussion see also David Lyon (1997: 29).

1) The authoritarian control over cyberspace;

2) The formation of virtual communities;

3) The evolution towards face-to-face communication and self-organization;[102]

4) The differentiation of Internet opinion and formation of opposition consciousness; and

5) The formation of Internet activist (opinion-leader) groups.

5.2 The Birth of e-NSOs: from virtual community to real society

Howard Rheingold (1993) has foreseen a "virtual community" since the early development of the Internet and argued for a "next social revolution" of "smart mobs" (2000) in the recent past. Analogously, the trajectory of China's Internet space also experienced a two-stage evolution in less than 10 years: the emerging e-civil society and its move towards real society, namely, "from the screen to the street" using Rheingold's phraseology.

5.2.1 The Status Quo of Virtual Communities in China

By June 2003, according to the statistics of CNNIC (China Internet Network Information Center), the number of network computers dramatically increased from 299,000 in October 1997 to 2,572,000 in June 2003, Internet users from 620,000 to 6,800,000, IP-addresses reached 32,084,480 and WWW sites reached 473,900.[103] (See CNNIC Report 2003/7)

However, the diffusion of Internet on both technological and societal levels are confined to the geographic boundary of Chinese cities, where the telecom networks were fully developed in the 1990s. Meanwhile, most parts of rural areas still lack basic telecom infrastructure, as well as having

[102] According to Castells ([1997] 2004: 156), the Internet networking is both face-to-face and electronic (many-to-many communication). From fieldwork investigations, we, too, observed that face-to-face communication existed on a large scale during the Internet networking. In Chapter 7, this form of communication is addressed.

[103] As official Chinese statistics always raise doubts in international society, e.g. Eberhard Sandschneider deems it as "Falsche Daten" (2003:12), Internet specialists like Karsten Giese (2003:34) also doubts CNNIC's data in his analysis of China's "digital divide". However, we can't deny the strong growing trends behind those figures. The latest report revealed by CNNIC on Jan.15, 2004 confirmed this again, where it was stated that the number of Internet users in China had reached 79.50 millions, second only to the United States.

shortages of other basic public constructions. This digital leap forward also implies a "digital divide" of social organizations in rural China and urban China (see Giese, 2003).

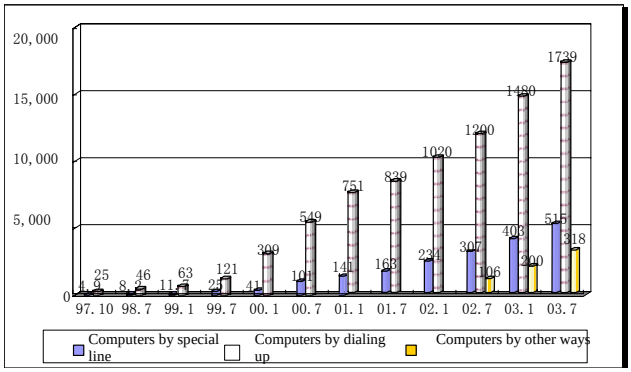

Figure 5.1: The growth of Internet networks (number of computers in thousands)
Source: The Report of Development of Chinese Internet Networks (CNNIC, 2003/7)

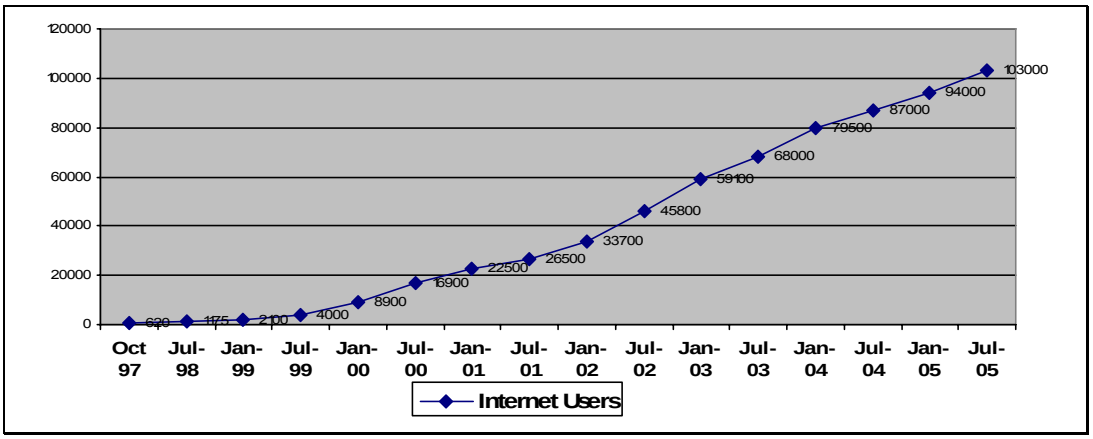

Figure 5.2: The growth of Chinese Internet users (in thousands)
Source: Collected from "Report of Development of Chinese Internet Networks (CNNIC)" (2003/7 and 2005/7)

It is significant that, due to the dramatic expansion of networks and terminators of the Internet, various kinds of virtual communities as "a combination of physical and virtual interaction, social imagination, and identity" have come into being (Shumar and Renninger, 2002:2), and have formed, aggregated and diffused. This "brave new world" consists of instant messaging (IM), email group/discussion list, BBS (or online discussion group, or eforum), chat rooms, text chat, MUD, Internet gaming and the latest Web-blog .

According to the extent of the visibility of communications, people can largely sort IM and e-forum into two opposites in the spectrum of virtual communities in China. The IM is mainly used for synchronous private communications, and the e-forum is highly public allowing asynchronous

and open communication. Besides these two basic forms of network communication, the web-blog, namely the online diary, has 17.5 million users (Blogers) by September 2006 (see the Webbloger Report of CNNIC, 2006). Though a number of web-blogs became more "public" and were involved quite deeply in the Internet politics, to a large extent, it can be seen as a variant of e-forum and then provisionally rule it out from this research. Likewise, the Internet gaming is the most common virtual community, with over 23.4% of Chinese Internet users indulged in it, but, it can be overlooked, for there is very little evidence suggesting any association intentions.[104]

Instant Messaging

Instant messaging, IM, the synchronous communication in the Internet world, is perhaps the most popular tool of Chinese Internet users. By April 2006, the total users of various IMs were about 98 millions, more than the number of mobile phone owners and local telephone users in China, in which the Chinese Instant Messenger, QQ's market share reached 83.5%.[105] By April 2007, the QQ IM had over 230 million registered users and 57 million Blogers.[106]

In general, this development of QQ or the increasing use of IM communication appears to be "more individualized and less structured by larger social forces…" as Shumar and Renninger (2002:5) refer to the virtual community in the West. The technological features of QQ, namely synchronous chatting and almost unlimited openness to online strangers, enable QQ's users to congregate as a large-scale virtual society and also a profitable business for Internet companies. In fact, those large portal-Internet companies such as Sina, Sohu, Neteasy, etc, depend heavily on these IM systems and message communications amongst the large-scale Internet users and mobile

[104] By July 2005, there were estimated to be 10.5% Chinese Internet users "used to" reading webblogs, among 103 millions internet users in total, although the exact number of Chinese bloggers was not yet available. Internet game industry gained over 4 billion Yuan in the first half of 2005. See an online document of CNNIC, available at: http://www.cnnic.net.cn/uploadfiles/pdf/2005/7/20/210342.pdf.

[105] The QQ IM system is developed by Shenzhen-based Tencent company. The original name of QQ was OICQ (Open ICQ. The ICQ was an initialism on the phrase "I seek you", which was first developed by the Israeli company Mirabilis, now owned by Time Warner's AOL subsidiary).

[106] See Xinhua News Agency, on April 12, 2007, "腾讯加速"变脸", 向跨媒体平台方向发展", by Zhou Wenlin, available at: http://news.xinhuanet.com/internet/2007-04/12/content_5969405.htm.

phone users. As a whole these companies had not been profitable until 2001 when they successfully channelled part of the massive flow of IMs into Internet-based SMS for mobile phone users.[107]

However, these technological features tend to confine QQ's use to be mainly on the private communication rather than forging "solidarity in cyberspace". The openness to online strangers seems bound to the contingent communication. For instance, while Falun Gong's members and exercisers utilized QQ's openness to spread persecution facts as an "anti-propaganda" against the Party-state's repression after 1999 (Zhao, 2004), the censoring authority also embedded a synchronous censoring system into QQ IM system and network.[108] Then, there emerged a differentiation between ordinary IM users and Internet activists. The latter group, when interviewed, said they refused to use QQ and turned to other closed IM systems, like MSN. For them, the "anonymous registration system" of QQ meant an insufficiency of communication security and the absence of "solidarity in cyberspace", while MSN's closed IM model offers a controllable openness and a stable relationship.

E-Forums (online discussion groups)

E-forum (*Dian Zi Lun Tan*), a WWW-based online discussion group, also named BBS (Broadcasting Board System), assembles together the poster system, the IM system, Text Chat and Chatroom with a friendly interface. Technologically, e-forums support both synchronous communication and asynchronous discussion, allowing a large number of users to post messages and pictures by tree-like channels on an e-forum. Taking into account the special meaning of "Big Posters"(大字报) in Chinese political culture, especially during the "Great Cultural Revolution",

[107] The CNNIC report (November 20, 2003) about Internet-based SMS also confirmed that this service was mainly used for communication with friends by young users (about 74.8%). In 2003, the total market share of Internet-based SMS amounted to 10 billion Yuan, among which the self-writing SMS (closest to IM and differed from ordered SMS) ranged around 15.2%.

[108] See Xinhua News Agency, July 27, 2005, "腾讯 QQ 将实名制管理, 网民反对声音强烈", available at: http://news.xinhuanet.com/ec/2005-07/27/content_3272580.htm. Also, in early 2003, at Zhengzhou, the capital city of Henan province, serial cases were reported, involving six girls who were robbed and raped by two QQ-friends. Available at: *http://news.sina.com.cn/c/2003-06-08/0132198385s.shtml*.

By contrast, OCI's "Internet Filtering in China in 2004-2005" (2005) documented 987 sensitive keywords filtered and blocked by QQ software. See page 22 (footnote 153) and page 45 of this report of OCI.

one will hardly deny the temptation that e-forum-based virtual communities may be regarded as an electronic renewal of this mass tradition.

According to CNNIC's surveys, Chinese Internet users have been accustomed to visiting e-forums. By 2003, 22.6% of Chinese Internet users were frequent viewers of various e-forums, while online chatting users (mainly QQ's users) numbered about 45.4% (see the Report of CNNIC, July 2003). Subsequently, as at July 2006, the frequent e-forum viewer number had increased to 43.2% (including public BBS and private online discussion groups), only second to the use of email. The e-forum became one of the most popular Internet communication tools in China (see CNNIC Report, 2006/6).

On the other hand, 26.2% of business websites offered services and spaces for BBS, following the services of news/events (46.8%) and online databases (40.1%) (CNNIC Survey Report 2002). By June 2003, the estimated number of e-forums were estimated to be approaching 30,000. [109]

5.2.2 The Ecology of e-forum Society: in the case of Xici

Since the first BBS (BBS of Chinese Input by Natural Code) emerged in 1994 in China, the online discussion groups (e-forums) have created perhaps the only meaningful public sphere in current China's urban space (Kluver, 2005). This section that follows sketches the basic structure of e-forum societies.

In most cases, they are established and managed by higher-educational institutions and for-profit Internet companies. Two examples are, the BBS societies of "*yi ta hu tu*" (www.ytht.net) which was founded by the students of Beijing University in 1999, and "*shui mu tsing hua*"

[109] Among 473,900 websites by June 2003, 8.70% business websites (10,802) were sorted as eforums. In addition, if we assume that most of educational websites (2.46%) and probably half of personal websites (4.77%) also provided e-forums, the total number of e-forums reached to about 30,000.

(www.smth.net) of Tsinghua University.[110] And, many more leading business BBS societies, including Tianya club, Xici society, Cat898, and such like, have accumulated a high-level flow of views and a remarkable social influence. As the only open channel which China's students and mainstream Internet users could use to express themselves, they are actually regarded as the windsock of the Internet opinion. This point will be discussed later.

Xici (西祠) society (http://www.xici.net), founded in 1997 by Elong (a Nanjing-based Internet company) (http://www.elong.com), is one of the earliest and largest BBS societies in China. People could freely initiate a BBS without paying money prior to 2002. Within Xici' over 10,000 personal BBSs, several hundreds of influential BBS cover almost all subjects that Chinese virtual space can have and Chinese law allows, such as academia, religions, IT, city communities, cartoons, flirt clubs, etc. Some of them required membership, while most of them are open communities.

As well as the contents of Xici's BBSs might just echo the physical world of China, the niche that Xici's BBSs occupy is also hierarchically structured in five layers (see also Qiu, 2000):

The lowest layer is actually the largest group – the anonymous viewers;

The second layer consists of those regular users who frequently visit Xici. Most of them have personalized interface of preserved BBSs – including IM system, contact list and links within the BBS group. They and these BBS spaces constitute the main body of the virtual community that is referred to in this study. It is also significant that through these observations, it is noted that besides public communication via posts, text chat and instant messaging, some BBSs often held the "online saloons" (版聊) and organized the "offline saloons" (or offline gathering,版聚). The offline saloons provide the opportunity that Internet users gather and conduct face-to-face communication.

[110] After YTHT was closed by the authority in September 2004 and SMTH was limited for non-Tsinghua's login after March 2005, there arose two waves of online protest movements, including online petition etc. Available at: http://www.smthbbs.com/

The third layer comprises the moderators of BBS, who are called "版主" or "斑竹" in Chinese (equivalent to a bulletin board facilitator). They are in charge of day-to-day management of BBS by means of promoting discussion, deleting posters, and blocking certain users. From this level, the identity of the virtual community begins to correspond with real social identity in Shuma and Renninger's (2002) sense. It should be stressed that these moderators of e-forums also roughly comprise the group of Internet activists in urban China.

The fourth layer is that level behind the BBS communication, i.e. those system administrators of Xici website or Elong company. They are responsible for the self-censorship and technological support, including the registration of BBS' moderators after June 2002.

The top level is the "Internet police", the Big Brother of Xici society. As an independent police force, they have almost unlimited system privileges in accessing the data pool of BBS, can record and trace all IP-addresses of users at their will, delete posts and even shut down BBSs in certain instances.[111]

In the case of Ruisi BBS, the featured BBS of events and news among over 10,000 BBSs of Xici society, began to have bourgeoning flows of posts after the crash of 11 September 2001, when the liberalist moderator – a journalist Zhao Jing[112] – forged a pro-American discussion. Elong company closed it for nearly half a year in 2002 due to pressure from the authorities, linked to a female student user, "Stainless Mouse" being arrested and the ensuing wave of protest in Ruisi BBS. Ironically, the Xici society began to be profitable after this action. By the end of 2002, the estimate

[111] By 2005, the estimated "Internet-police" ranged between 30,000 and 40,000. Cf. "Big Brother is talking", *Newsweek*, Oct.17, 2005.

[112] According to Zhao Jing, his Internet pseudonym "Anti" means "to oppose". Zhao, served for *Chinese Time* (Huaxia Shibao) while moderating the Ruisi BBS, and currently works for *New York Time* in Beijing. Cf. the informal interview with Zhao Jing, on November 10, 2005, in Cologne.

profit that year totalled close to one million Yuan for the first time. This augured well for profitable business progress among all BBSs.[113]

This situation largely mirrors another invisible boundary of the Internet-censoring system in addition to the above five-layer hierarchy structure of e-forums – a firewall system supported by Cisco's network technology, as part of the "Golden Shield Project" since 1998.[114]

However, while the top-down control over public discourse was strengthened without interruption, it also witnessed the flow of social resources via e-forum-based networks. Over time, the new e-grassroots NSO or e-civic association stemmed from e-forums and penetrated the constraint boundaries as the following case shows.

5.2.3 E-Civic Association: in the case of Light of Hope

Due to the wide-spread mistrust linked to the Hope Project (a large-scale developmental project launched by the CYDF, a GONGO, since 1992), an exclusively e-forum-based e-civic association "Light of Hope" (LOH) came into being in 2001.[115] Compared with the Hope Project and former

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[113] See *Nanfang Daily* (Nanfang Ribao), 03.11.2003.

[114] The *ad hoc* Project of "Golden Sheild" refers to a super-large-scale information system established by the Ministry of Public Security of China since 1998, with a budget of over 6 billion Yuan. See official website about Golden Sheild, available at: http://www.china.org.cn/chinese/zhuanti/283732.htm. See also an online document of Tsinghua Wangbo Co. of Tsinghua Univesity, the technological supervising company of Golden Sheild Project, available at: http://www.wnt.cn/cnwnt/article/20030320/20030320000685_1.xml.

The internet censorship system is only a sub-system of this Golden Shild Project. Many independent investigations have verified China's government has built a Cisco's routers-based leading firewall and filtering/censorship system in the world to control Intenet, such as Jonathan Zittrain and Benjamin Edelman (Berkman Center for Internet & Society, Harvard Law School)'s Empirical Analysis of Internet Filtering in China (May to November 2002), Amnesty International's (November 2002) report of "State Control of the Internet in China", and latest report of The OpenNet Initiative's "Internet Filtering in China in 2004-2005:A Country Study" (April 14, 2005).

Woesler's (2002) observation also verified the restrictive censorship and self-censorship – so-called "human rights not found" on the Chinese web via search engines.

[115] CYDF, Chinese Youth Development Foundation, is formally "hosted" by the Central Committee of Communist Youth League of China, a small partner of CCP. Fraud within the Hope Project was firstly raised by a donor, Mr. Tang, an ordinary officeman of a Shanghai-based company. In 2001, he found his personal donation of about 5,400 Yuan to 14 study-loss pupils in Xuanhan County of Sichuan province was missing but covered up by local educational organs and by CYDF via fake letters. *Nanfang Weekly* investigated and revealed this scandal on November 29, 2001, resulting in a broad mistrust among Chinese society who targeted the Hope Project. Subsequently, a financial staff member of CYDF, Yang Liu, attempted to disclose a potentially greater scandal involving fraud within CYDF in association with *Nanfang Weekly* but was suppressed. Yang was forced to flee to the United States and died in 2006; the *Nanfang Weekly* was also forced to withdraw the editoral feature concerning this scandal on March 31,2002, despite that a little bit earlier, this scandal had been revealed by Hong Kong-based *Ming Bao* and then widely spread via the Internet within mainland of China.

cases of FON, this association had similar public-benefit purpose but differed in its methods of fundraising and organizational stucture. Our investigation into this e-grassroots civic association follows the two-fold framework of governance structure of NSOs: the stakeholder relation and performance.

5.2.3.1 Stakeholder Relation of LOH: growing from e-grassroots

The formation of Light of Hope can be traced to May 2001, when an Internet activist "Dongtin Sparrow" (Pseudonym) posted a post titled "FAQ of helping studyless children" in the "Sparrow BBS" (a small BBS of the e-forum society "History, Peace and Cooperation Net", now dissolved). By September 2001, seven "net friends" jointly donated 1,050 Yuan to a child in Xinhuang in Hunan province. This was the first fund-raising exercise in the history of LOH. Meanwhile, the first "organization" of LOH came into being after an online negotiation. That is a special BBS within a small BBS society, Chinese Wind (*http://www.windcn.com*, also now dissolved).

During these early developments, the loosely organized predecessor e-association "Internet Volunteer Federal for Helping Poor Children Go to School" successfully raised the first donations. The second donation of 3,350 Yuan from 14 participants and donated to 11 receivers (10 in Shan'xi province, 1 in Ningxia province), was made in November 2001. The third donation of 7,990 Yuan was supplied by 29 donators, distributed to 28 children (13 in Shan'xi province, 7 in Hunan province, 8 in Sichuan) and was completed by January 2002.

By August 22, 2003, 496 studyless children received financial supports via one-to-one direct sponsorship. Each amounted several hundred Yuans. The total amount received, 180,000 Yuan, involved donations from over 500 "net friends" who had logged into the e-forum of LOH and contributed. LOH's volunteers of "Investigation Group" were responsible for *ex post* field investigation. The results of these investigations were posted on LOH's e-forum and, often raised

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See the journalist Fang Jinyu's online article, "Where is the hope of Hope Project: The investigation and thinking about Xu Yongguang's corruption", available at: http://www.epochtimes.com/b5/3/1/2/n261740p.htm. Xu was the founder and director of CYDF, and is currently the vice-president of China Charity.

long lasting discussions which satisfied the demands of sponsors and potential sponsors. They also reported that in most cases the sponsors and specific recipients remained connected via letters.

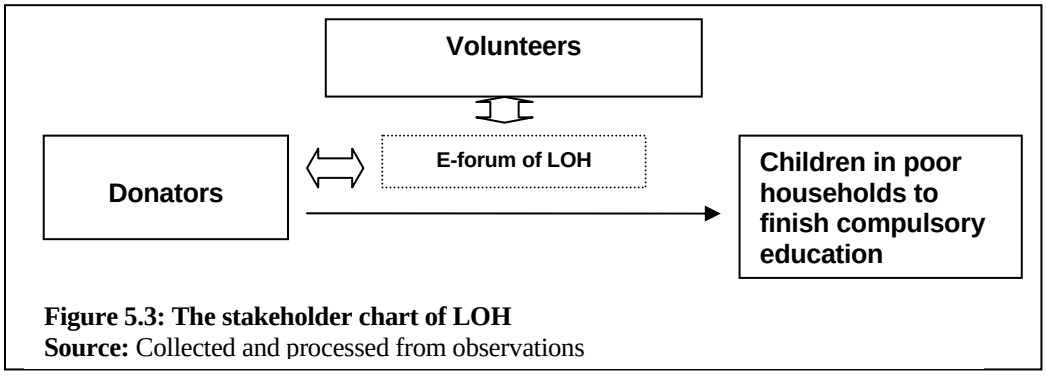

Figure 5.3: The stakeholder chart of LOH
Source: Collected and processed from observations

This process may be termed as the "one-dimensional-relation" connecting the three stakeholders of LOH: volunteers, donors, and children from poor families (see Figure 5.3). There is no physical interaction between donors and recipients, nor between LOH, local official government and schools. Henceforth, LOH's "one-help-one" model is differentiated from the way of pooling money as used by Hope Project (CYDF).

However, contrary to FON and CYDF who relied heavily on INGOs, public media or official propaganda machine, the networks of local governments or semi-official social organizations, local primary schools, and pro-democracy high-ranking cadres of CCP (see Figure 5.3), the members of LOH kept distant from all the above official institutions and public media as a norm of LOH. Their probable horizontal relations with other NSOs were confined to personal connections.[116]

That said, the highly-fluid team of volunteers partly overlapped and was loosely linked via the e-forum of LOH with donators. The e-forum of LOH involved here was the only visible platform of this organization, and all volunteers and potential donors or supporters came from such e-grassroots. By June 2002, the volunteers increased to 67, consisting of students, teachers in colleges, private entrepreneurs, enterprise clerks, public servants, lawyers, journalists, and architects. Some of them currently live in the USA, Canada, Germany, and Singapore.

[116] Cf. the interview with Shen Yachuan (known as Shi Fei Ke of pseudonym) on May 6, 2005 in Beijing. Shen was a key member during the institutionalization of LOH.

During the process of recruiting volunteers, they had not recognized each other until they went to meet together for the first time at a small-scale offline saloon organized by some active volunteers who lived in Beijing after participating in the discussion on LOH's e-forum for several months.[117] By 2005, most of volunteers could only be seen by each other at these small-scale offline saloons and during field investigations. These field investigations were conducted by some volunteers in order to verify the information of the poor children. In the long run, such routinized and habitualized offline saloons and online discussions tend to characterize LOH as a pure e-civic association.[118]

5.2.3.2 The Capacity Building of LOH

During the course of early February and through until late March, a former financial manager of CYDF and a retired general secretary of the Ganshu (province) branch of CYDF revealed a financial scandal at the CYDF to the public, by means of a press conference in Guangzhou and two newspapers. Though the featured story in the latter was forced to withdraw during the process of being printed, this scandal is still widely available on Internet through the digital dissemination of detailed but officially "unpublished" reports.

In this context, I noticed that, the capacity building of LOH continued throughout the first half of 2002, based on their online and offline discussions. This institutional design process within LOH began with the first online meeting (the formal online saloon) on January 12, 2002, during which six basic principles were established as follows relating to the target, positioning, organizational structure, and running model[119]: (1) the organization is to be run on a non-profit basis; (2) it should be exclusively embedded upon the Internet; (3) it should help the children in remote poor areas whose families are too poor to afford it for them to complete elementary

[117] Ibid.

[118] For Berger and Luckmann, this habitulization, a term borrowed from Schutz's phenomenology of everyday life, is a "theoretical solitary individual detached from any social interaction", and the formation of institutions "occurs whenever there is a reciprocal typification of habitualized actions by types of actors." (Berger and Luckmann, 1967:72)

[119] See "Chronicle Events of Light of Hope", available at: http://www.lohcn.org/hope/debug/HTML/dasj/dasj.htm.

educations; (4) it should determine the authenticity of the recipients' information; (5) LOH should not be involved in the transfer of money directly, the donation should be transmitted from donator to recipients directly; (6) the donation should be limited to the use for the study.

On February 12, 2002, the sub-BBS on the Chinese Wind (BBS) was formally renamed as "Light of Hope (LOH)". From observing LOH's practice in the following years, I extract five distinct features as follows. They are also the shared features of other e-civic associations like Green-Stone and Green-Web.

E-Marketing: From the base of the "Chinese Wind's" e-forum, members of LOH spread their idea in Tianya Club and other e-forums in early 2002 and won broad support. Applications by volunteers for positions subsequently increased rapidly. Meanwhile, they established connections with other NGOs and e-civic associations such as Lighthouse Project (a Guangzhou based educational volunteer association), Overseas Chinese Education Foundation (a Chinese overseas student NGO).

Independence: To avoid any possible risks derived from the censorship institution, LOH ended their association with "Chinese Wind" and founded their independent virtual community at *http://hope.cnfarmer.net* on April 26, 2002. A bit later, in June, LOH acquired their independent URL (Uniform Resource Locator) *http://www.lohcn.org* constructed by a volunteer with his self-developed computational program. It is important to note, so far, LOH was still a purely e-forum based virtual community, keeping distant from control institutions and conventional civic associations.

Online meeting: From April to May of 2002, the core group, which consisted of early founders of LOH, held two joint online meetings (the formal online saloons). On April 3, 2002, they endorsed an independence principle, that LOH should deny direct sponsorship and that, all costs occurred in field investigation, e-forum maintenance and so on should be borne by LOH's members. To cope

with the rapidly increasing volunteers, the third online congress was held on May 4, 2002 concentrating on volunteer related problems and organizational transparency.

Volunteers: There were two important documents drafted and signed in April 2002. One was the "General Rule of Volunteering", and the other was the "Agreement of the Management Team in Opposing Non-public-benefit". In these documents of LOH, some basic norms, like "pursuing durable public welfare" and "non-profitness" and "depoliticization", were highlighted.

Structure of organization: As the figure below shows, from the perspective of organizational structure, LOH has a flat structure with only two parallel levels. The executive group is derived from the core group which was in-place by the end of May 2002. The members of this group are not merely those original founders but include some more recent additions. The supervising group came into existence during the second online congress as a method of promoting LOH's efficiency and accountability. The second tier is comprised of six groups of LOH's volunteers: Information, Investigation, PR, Human Resources, Legal Support and Internet Support, driving LOH in both cyberspace and the real world (see Figure 5.4).

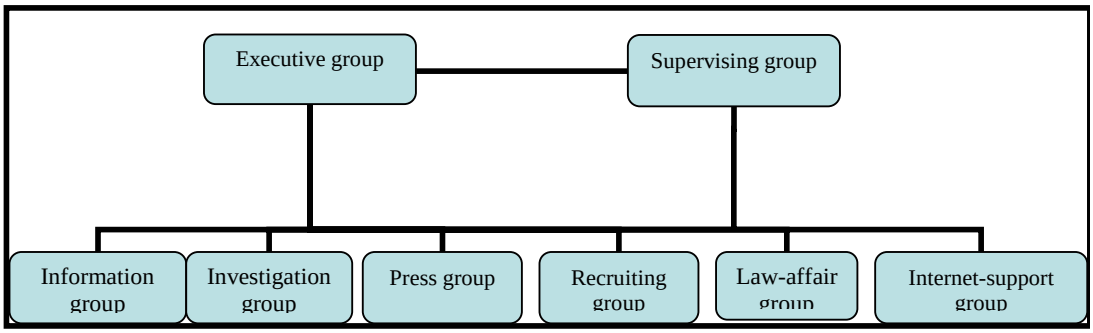

Figure 5.4: The organizational structure of LOH
Source: LOH's homepage: http://www.lohcn.org/hope/debug/HTML/zuzhi/zuzhi.htm

Ostensibly, the case of LOH shows us an institutionalization process of Internet based self-organization, where the e-grassroots structure of LOH seems to be a "real virtuality". Nevertheless, it is not really virtual, because both the schemas and resource in the micro level are quite visible and effective according to Sewell's (1992:10) explanation of Giddens' twin concept of virtual structure. The whole institutionalization process represented above (including both habitualization through

online/offline communication and formalization of organizational capacity building) is focused on the "visibility" in distinguishing from CYDF's "Hope Project", and the performance from FON.

That said, the structure of institutionalization and mobilization as the medium and outcome of LOH's online networks and communicative actions (online meetings, for instance) has created a visible social network that has blurred the boundaries of membership and involvement, also of communication and action. When this analysis is extended to other Internet based NSOs, the pre-existing networks of acquaintance or friendship may have functioned in specific cases but are not necessarily a pre-condition of a virtual community and further structuration.[120] For example, ICPC, an unregistered intellectual NSO and also a "quasi e-civic association" depending on Internet and telephone connections for day-to-day communication, organized two online meetings in October 2003 and November 2005, where overseas Chinese political dissidents and local liberal intellectuals jointly re-elected a board of ICPC.[121]

Theoretically, it showss a contrary development against what Uwe Matzat (2002) argues in his observations about the professional BBS in Europe in that a successful online community usually relies on the social embeddedness in "real life community".

Therefore, through the e-grassroots of "e-civic association", one can measure to what degree the virtual networks are embedded and institutionalized in the organization, or to what degree NSOs are involved in e-civil society and thus identify the Internet (e-forum) based NSOs that distinguishing them from formal NGOs.

[120] Besides LOH, during the interview with an e-forum-based ENGO Green-Web on April 14, 2005, I came across four volunteers (also e-forum users) gathering at the office of Green-Web who were from different cities with different backgrounds and did not know each other. They verified respectively that each of them had a strong motivation to communicate face-to-face after involvement in the online discussion in Green-Web e-forum; and that their travelling and living costs in Beijing lasting from two days to three months, were totally self financed.

[121] See "独立中文笔会召开第二届网络会员大会", by ICPC, on Nov. 5,2005, avaiable at: http://www.chinesepen.org/dlbhdt/ShowArticle.asp?ArticleID=86; and "独立中文作家笔会完成换届选举", by ICPC, on Dec.4, 2005, available at: http://www.chinesepen.org/dlbhdt/ShowArticle.asp?ArticleID=13.

The strongest version, like LOH's exclusive embeddedness in the virtual community, can be categorized as a pure e-civic association without any conventional boundary of organization. The weakest version is close to the mainstream semi-official associations underpinned by face-to-face relational networks and often "over bureaucratic" organization. In contrast, the latter such as China Association for NGOs' Cooperation (CANGO), the use of the Internet platform (e-forum) remains very limited. In practice, most NSOs range between the two poles above, but have a shared feature that their e-grassroots networks are formed by online communication.

5.3 Collective Identity and the Internet

According to Alberto Melucci (1996), three dimensions are involved in collective identity building during the new social movements (NSMs), as follows:

> (i)"as a process…concerning the ends, means, and the field of actions";
>
> (ii)"as a process…a network of active relationship between actors…";
>
> (iii)"a certain degree of emotional investment…which enables individuals to feel themselves part of a common unity". (Melucci, 1996:70-71)

The next chapter tends to address the rise of new social movements in which NSOs function as social movement organizations. Here, this research concentrates on the identity building, i.e. a cognitive structure of NSO agents stemming from the Internet which is parallel with the politicization of NSOs.[122] (See Figure 2.2)

Using Melucci's threefold dimensions of collective identity, one can frame a line of the cognitive structure of agents from the above cases of virtual communities and Internet-based NSOs. That is, the social construction of so-called "real virtuality", namely the "identization" (Melucci, 1996:77) of Internet-based NSO agents. It involves a duality of this structure:

[122] In *The Construction of Social Reality,* Searle notes a parallelism between the functional structure of the Background and the intentional structure of the social phenomena to which the Background capacities relate. (Searle, 1995: 142) In the three-level structuration processes of NSOs, Searle's two structures correspond to the structure of agents and the politicization of NSOs.

- Such a real virtuality as the essence of the Internet world can be understood but the expression of the social differentiation. (Castells, [1996] 2000: 402)
- The "identization" means "increasingly self-reflexive and constructed manner in which contemporary collective actors tend to define themselves" (Melucci, 1996:77), i.e. a self-referential self-categorization process.

Then, following Smelser's route of social grouping and social differentiation (see p.36), I propose a three-part cognitive structure of NSO agents in accordance with Melucci's threefold dimensions: [123]

(I) The formation of project identity;

(II) The reconstruction of collective memory;

(III) The formation of a new generation of intellectuals.

In the formation process of collective memory, above identization with memory trace, appears to be a self-referential choice or strategy for NSOs in which the claim-making of "asserting rights" develops from a democratization-centred "resistance identity" to a citizenship-centred "project identity" of NSOs.[124] On this basis, the further structuration to trigger the repoliticization of NSOs is possible.

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[123] See Eva M. Knodt's forword for Luhmann's *Social System* (1995). In this forword, Knodt holds that where consciousness is lacking, it needs to be imposed meaning; meaning is to "make a difference" according to Gregory Bateson (1972:48), and "meanings resides in the self-referential structure of a consciousness…in selecting a self-generated horizon of surplus references…"(Knodt, 1995: xxvi).

Likewise, Francesco Alberoni holds "three principles of dynamics" in the formation of collective identity: ambivalence, reciprocity of the energetic investment, and tendency to reduce ambivalence. Cf. Alberoni (1984), *Movement and Institution*, New York: Columbia University Press, recited from Melucci (1996: 81).

[124] Manuel Castells proposes a distinction between three forms and origins of identity building in his *The Power of Identity*: legitimizing identity, resistance identity, and project identity.

According to Castells, resistance identity is "generated by those actors who are in positions/conditions devalued and/or stigmatized by the logic of domination, thus building trenches of resistance and survival on the basis of principles different from, or opposed to, those permeating the institutions of society..."

Project identity, often developed from resistance identity but expanding toward the transformation of society as the prolongation of this project of identity, precisely, "when social actors, on the basis of whatever cultural materials are available to them, build a new identity that redefines their position in society and, by so doing, seeks the transformation of overall social structure" (Castells, [1996]2004: 8-10).

5.3.1 The Formation of Project Identity

Since the leading Italian sociologist Alberto Melucci introduced collective identity to the analysis of social movements (Melucci, 1988, 1989, 1994), emerging theoretical models emphasizing the critical importance of collective consciousness developed in the evolution of social movement (e.g. Gamson, 1992; Klandermans, 1992; Zald, 1992; Mueller, 1994). Among these models, as some scholars underlined, "the transformation of collective consciousness is a crucial aspect" (Stockdill, 2001: 205).

Though the consciousness-intention-related issues are difficult to measure in a small-scale research or to get to grips with in interviews, those NSO entrepreneurs who are engaged in semi-structured and in-depth interviews can be regarded as the agents of such a crucial transformation of collective intentionality who fulfil the cognitive gap between the pragmatic political attitude of the mass (and students) (Chan, 1999) and the rise of "asserting rights consciousness".[125] During the Internet-based identity building, in other words, these NSO entrepreneurs simultaneously functioning as the "identity entrepreneurs" (Derrida, 1976: 118) whose perception and actions, namely the Background capacities in John Searle's terms of consciousness intention, define the purpose of NSOs, differentiate the cognitive boundaries of the political space of NSOs, and maintain the trust within NSOs.

The term "Background", as Searle emphasizes, is used to explain how rules function. The rules are not self-interpreting and the background is not itself intentional. Rather, "the Background consists of mental capacities, dispositions, stances, ways of behaving, know-how, savoir faire, etc., all of which can be manifest when there are some intentional phenomena, such as intentional action, a perception, a thought, etc." (Searle, 1992:193, 196)

[125] In the latest post-interview with Chen Yongmiao, a high-profile Internet activist and pro-civil-rights activist, journalist, and lawyer, on March 22 2006 in Hangzhou, Chen maintained the "asserting rights movements" as a long-term strategy toward democracy for civil rights organizations.

Therefore, the "Background capacities" that in Searle's term to define the individual's cognitive properties that determine that collective intention first of all rest on identity entrepreneurs' adaptive capacities to deal with the particular institutional structure. The Background here refers to the creative ideas by which they become the agents of the self-referential transformation of the collective consciousness, such as Song Xianke's "constructive opposition" and Wang Yi's "principle of voice equilibrium". Then, the entrepreneurship of NSOs, as the agents of structuration, can be defined as the background capacities by which those NSO entrepreneurs can influence the formation of rules and the flow of resource. [126]

5.3.1.1 Song Xianke: from radical resistance to constructive resistance

Song Xianke, for instance, does represent an individual cognitive change from radical resistance to "rational opposition", and subsequently the shift of "asserting rights" actions from personal involvement to collective choice as the purpose of his institutionalized network – GDHA. That is, a three-stage episodic transformation in accordance with the evolutionary dynamics of whole NSOs as previously stated. The resistance identity of his circle thus transforms to a project identity as a long-term organizational goal (the networking process is to be addressed in Chapter 7).

1) 1989--1997: Marked by the establishment of the Chinese Labour Rights Union (a pro-democracy political organization co-launched by Prof. Yuan Hongbing and Mr. Song in Beijing in 1993), Song was deeply involved in the pro-democracy actions during this period. He was then jailed after the authority quickly dissolved this organization and put into the camp of "re-education through labour" from 1994 to 1996. In subsequent years, he was still under the surveillance of local police and any intention to assist the pro-democracy actions "meant nearly no space to survive", according to Song.[127]

[126] See Figure 4.4. Here, the background is assumed the precondition of the forms of sorts of flows (flows of social capital, social resource, etc.), namely the institutionalizing of organizations in Lin's sense.

[127] Supra note 45.

2) 1997--2003: Since 1997, three episodic changes eventually induced Song's personal transformation into a professional NSO entrepreneur, concentrating on the assertion of constitutional rights or "constructive resistance", in his words:

- In mid-1996, beginning with "a friend of a friend", a young liberal lecturer, Zuang Liwei at Jinan University, Song entered the "inter-isolated" world of liberal intellectuals in Guangzhou city and gradually established a personalized circle among them. After years, this network grew to a very rare formal association that was recognized by the local authorities in recent years, which embraced almost all of the active or famed liberal intellectuals in Guangdong province;
- In 1997, after renewing his lawyers qualification and beginning to engage in ordinary civil and business legal affairs, Song was for the first time involved and moved by the "asserting rights" actions of a lawyer Zhou Litai in Shenzhen city, who was perhaps the first professional labour rights lawyer since 1996 in China. Song rightly gave up a job in a law firm and turned to "asserting rights" actions.
- After 1999, the Internet changed Song's trajectory. Through deep involvement in the Internet in three methods — posting a great number of posters in e-forums, moderating e-forums ("Democracy and Freedom", and Guan Tian Teahouse), and organizing offline saloons of GT e-forum after 2002 — Song become an Internet activist and Internet opinion leader. Then, "the assertion of constructive resistance reached maturity" in 2003, said Song.

3) 2003--2006: In the wake of Sun Zhigang's death and SARS crisis in China in 2003, Song actually gave up his legal career and turned to institutionalizing the offline saloons and moving his personal small-scale network of liberal intellectuals toward a formal social association (GDHA). I.e. he has transformed to a professional NSO activist in the context of the rise of "asserting rights movements", since 2003. It is in these years, according to Song, that he referred to the claim of "asserting rights" as "constructive resistance" reflected in his threefold expressive actions:

- His posts in GT e-forums and his themes for offline saloons changed to that of "be moderate and constructive";
- He began to maintain distance from early comrades or pro-democracy dissidents in real life, even rejecting advances to co-sign some public letters that appeared far radical in his view;
- To claim civil rights for the social vulnerable groups dictated almost all his actions after 2003, including his attempts to formalize the circle of liberal intellectuals.

In short, during the transformation from the "resistance identity" which aimed to organize a political party in early 1990s to the "constructive resistance" as a "project identity" of a professional NSO/civil rights activist,[128] both the intensity and orientation of the opposition consciousness have been decreased episodically, namely the de-radicalization of resistance consciousness.

Relative to the pragmatic political apathy and radical dissent – the former may properly fall into the category of "existing culture of subordination" in present-day China, the latter as "existing oppositional culture"[129] that can be rooted to the 1989's pro-democracy movement – the de-radicalization of the oppositional consciousness for the time being is located between the two extremes above. This change seems analogous to the pragmatism-oriented "melody change" "between party line and bottom line" occurring in China's public media (Zhao, 1998), or the "creative compliance" observed by Keane (2001).

5.3.1.2 Wang Yi: the principle of voice equilibrium

Wang Yi, aged 34, a young lecturer of law in Chengdu University, is currently the vice president of ICPC (Independent Chinese Pen Center, a self-organized association of liberal intellectuals). Similar to most of the Internet activists, Wang Yi's trajectory began with the involvement in e-forums, but

[128] In his *The Power of Identity*, Castells proposes three forms and origins of identity building: legitimizing identity, resistance identity, and project identity. (Castells ,［1997］2004: 8)

[129] In "The Making of Oppositional Consciousness", Mansbridge held the "crucial task of the civil rights movement was to undermine the existing culture of subordination while elevating the existing oppositional culture in such a way as to convince Black people that their engaging in a set of nonroutine, risky actions could change the nature of race relations…with Whites". (Mansbridge, 2001:23)

differentiated at the turning point when he launched the "principle of voice equilibrium". Hence, this development not only represents a calculated oppositional consciousness, but also enriches his "Background capacity" that an NSO entrepreneur should have at stake.

Contrary to Song's de-radicalization trajectory from radical resistance to constructive resistance, Wang's oppositional consciousness was moderated after a three-stage boundary-spanningg process: the more social boundaries his expressive actions were involved in, the more both the social influence (resource) and the visible danger to be treated as a social deviance or political dissident increase. Eventually, such a two-way tendency of the interpenetration effects of Wang's expressive actions arrived at an equilibrium between Wang's Internet-based challenging and the authoritarian social control in the physical society, i.e. it highlights the implicit boundary of the "heterotopia" of the Internet space or NSO's space in Foucault's original sense as the event-spaces of transgression.[130]

1) Prior to Wang's involvement in the Internet that can be traced to 2001 when he moderated one of the earliest influential e-forums—"*Tianya Zhongheng*"(天涯纵横), less than one year after he began to surf the Internet. After the "*Tianya Zhongheng*" was closed by the authorities, he moved to the "Tianya Club" and hosted "*Guan tian Cha she* (Teahouse)" e-forum, and later co-launched a new e-forum "Constitutional Forum (宪政论衡, *http://www.xianzheng.net*)",[131] and then became a broadly-recognized Internet opinion leader in present-day China;

2) Since 2002, Wang experienced a personal change from being a pure "Internet writer" to an Internet activist: He co-organized Chengdu-based offline saloons (读书会) of Guantian e-forum (in total, 17 times by November 2005) and co-launched a series of campaigns to assert the "rational resistance". Such as the joint letters over the past few years, calling for a just trial for the "Living

[130] Hetherington has developed Foucault's conception of heterotopia and defines it as "That incongruity emerges through a relationship of difference with other sites, such that their presence either provides an unsettling of spatial relations or an alternative representation of spatial relations." (Hetherington, 1997: 51)

[131] By far, Guantian is among the most influential BBS in China, and Guantian Tea House was one of its main sub-eforum.(available at http://www.tianyaclub.com prior to 2006, currently as http://www.tianya.cn).

Buddha Tenzin Delek Rinpoche", supporting jailed internet activist Du Daobing, redressing the "June 4th" movement, calling for compensation for related victims and the "Tian'anmen Mothers".

3) A little bit later, Wang's social influence was spilled over to the print media: After his Internet posters were frequently reprinted by the print media, Wang turned to write social reviews for print media.[132] It was during this period that Wang formulated the "principle of voice equilibrium". Using Wang's own words, it represents a "rational oppositional consciousness" under restrictive circumstance.[133]

In general, the "principle of voice equilibrium" refers to such a situated action in practice: If his online reviews "criticize against the Party-state and violate the 'bottom line' that could be tolerated by the censoring agency at the largest extent", he "will then immediately release a number of moderate essays via both print media and e-forums to mitigate or dilute" such an expressive "deviance".[134]

Significantly, this "principle of voice equilibrium" was also used as a "balance theory (relationship)" (see Kilduff and Tsai, 2003: 42-42) during Wang's networking. For example, to consolidate the local networks of NSOs and cultivate the cognitive basis for federalism constitutional reform, Wang asserted the "local consciousness" against the Beijing-centred centralism. A paradoxical balance thus emerges from two moves: the increasing "sedimentation" (Berger and Luckmann, 1967) of local networks, and the rising role of Wang within the whole NSO

[132] According to Wang, being a columnist of the liberal paper *Nanfang Metropolis Daily* since 2002, he could reject any "collective welfare" of Chengdu University, especially the "housing distribution plan". In fact, his "work unit" Chengdu University ceased to pay his salary from 2003 to 2005 without cause, and Wang's living income in this period almost totally depended on his writing for print media and international online magazines. Cf. interview with Wang Yi, on May 17, 2004, in Chengdu.

[133] Cf. interview with Wang Yi, on May 17, 2004, in Chengdu.

[134] These essays include "Revoking the 'Political-legal Committee' (*zheng fa wei*) of the CCP" and "Chengdu Da Tu Sha 360 Zhou Nian Ji (Mourning 360 Years of Chengdu Massacre)". Online posts, available at: http://www2.tianyaclub.com/new/TianyaDigest/TianyaArticleContent.asp?idWriter=0&Key=0&strItem=no01&idArticle=217173.

The bottom line actually refers to the "Party line" within the limited media space as Zhao (1998) launched as "between party line and bottom line". This tactic even includes a successful action designed by Wang Yi and his friends/network: he was elected as one of "Top 50 Most Influential Public Intellectuals in Present China" by *Nanfang Weekend* in late 2004.

network. Thus, the "principle of voice equilibrium" highlights Wang's role of identity entrepreneur in differentiating the boundaries between the "we" and the "otherness", the virtual community and physical world, the available political space and bottom-lines of the authority.[135] For Wang, either the rational resistance or the "principle of voice equilibrium" that penetrated all his expressive actions is subject to "a historical process of moral resource accumulation" in his words. Theoretically, it is rather a project identity in Castells' sense with the long-term purpose for liberal intellectuals.

In summary, from the above two trajectories of leading identity entrepreneurs of NSOs, one can find a moderate "project identity" has replaced the resistance identity to a large extent. As the outcome of social relations and social interactions occurring in the Internet-based networking, the oppositional consciousness one can observe from them has shifted from the abstract claim of "freedom and democracy" into specific claims of civil rights. Through which, these NSO entrepreneurs may be distinguished as a focus group.

5.3.2 The Reconstruction of Collective Memory

In Mansbridge's inductive studies of the subjective origins of the Black civil rights movements, the oppositional consciousness is defined as "an empowering mental state that prepares members of an oppressed group to act to undermine reform, or with throw a system of human domination" (Mansbridge, 2001:4-5). The "oppressed groups" involved in China's NSMs actually correspond to "social vulnerable groups" rather than NSO activist group. And, contrary to what Mansbridge holds that "activist intentions play a far smaller role" (Mansbridge, 2001:16), the identity entrepreneurs of NSOs instead are the main focus of the existing opposition culture in present-day China. The oppositional consciousness of NSOs as Song and Wang's cases show, therefore become more constructive and rational and then theoretically fill the gap between the pragmatic

[135] Supra note.

attitudes of elites and the "social vulnerable groups". This section attempts to explore the memory trace of their oppositional consciousness.

5.3.2.1 "We are all sons of June 4th": Wang Yi's case continued

Analogous to Andrews' (1999) argument in her "Contests of collective memory in post-authoritarian countries", Wang Yi' personal experience demonstrates to us a contesting path of a backward self-reflexive repairing of collective memory against the authoritarian control of the social memory.

Among one of a few interviewees who from the beginning of the interview linked the early memory about 1989 and later involvement in NGO-related actions, Wang linked it to the memory of 1989, especially his father's "thought work" and some shocking photos shot at the time, when he was only a middle school student. Wang himself attributed the origin of his oppositional consciousness to the reflective reaction derived from this distorted reality that drove him to read those "enlightenment" books published in the 1980s soon after he entered university until 2000.[136]

> "After June 4,1989, surrounded by forceful propaganda, I recognized it was a lie of the 'adult world'…Afterward, I began to read the series of *Foreward Future* (走向未来) in my first year of university, which were published in the 1980s in Sichuan province – made them easy to find in second-hand book market in Chengdu that time. After that, I thought, I had shortened the psychological gap with the generation of the 1980s."[137]

In this sense, Wang stressed he did belong to the "Sons of June 4th", a metaphor first launched by Yu Shicun (another Internet opinion leader). Still that year, he connected to the Internet for the first time and soon hosted the e-forum of "*Tianya Zhongheng*". Since then, he began a "*ban zhu*" life in e-forums and offline saloons, with a focus on "re-enlightenment" – the collectively repairing of the segmented memory of 1989.

[136] Supra note 133.

[137] Ibid.

For example, Wu Dunhong, aged 30, a pro-democracy Internet activist of "Democracy and Freedom" e-forum and the offline saloons of Guantian, said, only after he entered university did he begin to become aware of his memory of events concerning 1989 that had previously been distorted and blocked by the propaganda machine. But he did not achieve much in determining the truth until 1998 when he had graduated and connected to the Internet, particularly, the milestoning liberal website of "思想的境界" and later the e-forum of "Democracy and Freedom". Having co-signed almost every joint-letter claiming social-justice and civil rights for a period of five years, Wu has, since 2003, been sporadically detained on numerous occasions and interrogated by the police.[138]

Furthermore, it is first of all by Wang's expressive actions in the Internet that those "sons of June 4th" formed a group and then significantly filled the "structural hole" between them and those democracy activists in the 1989 movement. In late 2003, Wang Yi launched an online petition calling for the supports for Du Daobing who was jailed due to his online criticism against the Party/state. The public letter eventually collected 21 initial signatures on Nov. 2, 2003, including Liu Xiaobo. It was the first time since 1989 that Liu Xiaobo, one of the most well-known liberal intellectuals of the democracy movement in 1989 and political dissident in present China, emerged together with the Internet activists in a collective protest.

Wang verified they had never seen each other before, the connection between Wang and Liu in the first joint-letter petition was mediated by Ding Zhilin, the initiator of the "Tiananmen mothers movement". Developed to the late 2004, such occasional offline communicative actions were routinized into the NSO's frame: Liu was elected president, while Wang was elected vice president at the annual conference of ICPC on October 30, 2004 in Beijing.

[138] Cf. Interview with Wu Dunhong, on May 1, 2004 in Hangzhou. Among those impressive early e-forums, the website of "思想的境界"(Si Xiang de Jing Jie, http://www.sixiang.net) was set up in 1998 by a young lecturer (Li Zhigang) of Nanjing University. Though it lasted only 10 months, most of respondents verify that their personal experience of Internet can be traced to this enlightening website crossing 1998/1999.

5.3.2.2 The Reconstruction of Collective Memory

Extensively, paralleling the three-phase development of China's NGOs over the past 15 years, the forging of oppositional consciousness in those NSO agents can be characterized into three stages and three layers, on the basis of my in-depth interviews.

1) Prior to 1998, the de-politicised decade of the 1990s (also labelled as "political pragmatism") (Chan, 1999), the voice of those mainstream intellectuals (in particular, the old generation of liberal intellectuals) who were supposed to be "stunned by the coercive terror" demonstrated in the crackdown in the night of June 3, 1989 (Fewsmith, 2001b: 21), was absent for almost an entire decade. Wang Yi and many youth rested mainly on the isolated self-repair of memory of 1989 without broader witnessing.

2) After 1998/1999, spurred by the circulation of respected academic Li Shenzhi's essay entitled "50 years of Panic, Trials and Tribulations: Lonely Night-time Thoughts on National Day", various online communities focused on the collectively repairing the social memory of 1989.[139] This process of the collective repairing can be identified as four layers.

At first glance, it is by means of the websites which concentrated the reflexive thinking of liberal intellectuals that spilled over to ordinary visitors. The milestoning website of "思想的境界" concerning "liberal thoughts" as stated earlier, for instance, was mentioned by most interviewees as a common starting point in their reflective rethinking of the 1989 movement.

The second lever was relatively diffused among a number of e-forums, such as the e-forum of "Democracy and Freedom". They functioned like "mnemonic communities" facilitating the re-discovery of the truth of 1989's movement through "mnemonic socialization" (Zerubavel, 1996).

[139] Li Shenzhi (1923-2003), was deemed as "one of China's most important campaigners for political reform and democracy…what Li is most likely to be remembered for is his contribution to the resurgence of liberalism in China and his courage in calling for liberal democracy under the present-day Communist rule." See Liu Juning's "Farewell to a Courageous Thinker", in *The Asian Wall Street Journal*, May 14 2003.

See also Nora Sausmikat's (2001) „Demokratisierungsdiskurse unter Intellektuellen in der VR China 2000", Project Discussion Papers No. 11, Jan. 2001 (Discourses on Political Reform and Democratization in East and Southeast Asia), Universität Duisburg-Essen.

Their vague remembrance of 1989, summarized by Wu, who said "they appeared to be brainwashed by school education and the propaganda machine after 1989",[140] was aroused and then repaired via online and offline (saloon) discourse with those witnesses, whose memories helped corroborate their own. (See also Halbwachs, [1950] 1982: 22-24)

In addition, there are some overseas Chinese websites that help to repair the collective memory through the online mourning for victims of the Tian'anmen Square Massacre and offering related files/memories about 1989 movement for visitors, such as the www.89-64.org. This is exactly what the so-called "political use of the Internet" refers to, as well as CDP and China Labour Watch and Li Hongkuan's pro-democracy newsletter "dacankao" have done since the late 1990s,[141] which are defined and documented by Chase and Mulvenon's (2002) *You've got dissent*.

The third layer took the form of individual postings in e-forums. For example, in December 2001, Wang Jinbo was sentenced to four years in prison for posting on the Internet a message urging Beijing to re-examine the 1989 Tiananmen movement (Chase and Mulvenon, 2002:22). However, the phenomena of collective postings that surged around the time of anniversary of the June 4, 1989 or related events, especially Zhao Ziyang's death (the former reformist General Secretary of CCP) in early 2005 and Jiang Yanyong's letter calling for redressing 1989 movement in 2004, seem to be more effective in the reconstruction of social memory.[142]

3) The fourth layer, also as the third stage, could be observed at the institutionalizing level. As the evolutionary trajectory of Wang Yi's case indicates, the on-going reconstruction of collective

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[140] Supra note 138.

[141] It is launched and maintained by Frank Siqing Lu, and sponsored by New York-based Human Rights in China (HRIC). Lu, a graduate student and organizer in 1989's pro-democracy movement, currently lives in Hong Kong and is the director of the Hong Kong Information Center for Human Rights and Democracy (http://www.hkhkhk.com). Another early website www.89-64-com, was hacked in 2002. See Chase and Mulvenon (2002).

China Labour Watch (http://www.chinalabourwatch.org/), a Hong Kong-based NGO for labour rights, was launched and maintained by a former leader of an independent union in 1989, Han Dongfang.

The Dacankao (http://www.bignews.org), established in 1997 by Li Hongkuan in New York, offers newsletter services to over one million users. In the first case of Internet dissident in China, Lin Hai, an Internet engineer in Shanghai city, was charged for offering 30,000 email addresses to Dacankao in 1998.

[142] Ibid. Chase and Mulvenon's studies also verify this "surging postings" around anniversary days and political events in China.

memory is eventually developing to the institutionalizing of the memory ties. ICPC, for instance, as a spontaneously organized "unregistered" association of liberal intellectuals founded in 2001, suggests the reconstruction of collective memory has evolved from a hidden network to the formal NSO, where certain groups of liberal intellectuals link together.

In summary, the development of the Internet and then Internet-based NSOs after 1998 have reconstructed a framework of social memory which the individual relies on for recollections (Halbwachs, [1952] 1992: 182). Through this, the remembrance of the democratic movement of 1989 centres on the repairing of social memory in which "the past is linked to the present, and in which various functions come together and establish a balance" (ibid: 130). Strictly speaking, the above reconstruction of collective memory has represented the memory trace of the de-radicalized (pragmatic) oppositional consciousness.

5.3.3 The New Generation of Public Intellectuals: a discussion

Following Schuman and Scott's (1989) linking of generational effects and social memory, this section is to extend the memory trace embedded in the above trajectory of "reconstruction of collective memory" to the generational differentiation: the young generation of liberal intellectuals as a crucial self-categorization of NSO agents.

5.3.3.1 The Generational Problem and New Public Intellectuals

From Mannheim's *The Problem of Generations* (1952), which was only rediscovered in recent decades, the generation of intellectuals is likely to be a "generational unit". The collective memory here functions in a twofold role: as a specific collective experience within the same generational unit or as an actual generation of intellectuals (see Schuman and Scott, 1989); as a concrete social bond linking various generational units (Mannheim, 1952: 304).

Despite the use of referring to new generation of political leaders in the post-Deng era (e.g. Fewsmith, 2002), it is linked to the new nationalism in present-day China after 1999. For example, Gries (2004) refers the term "fourth generation" to the emerging nationalist youth. Though one can hardly find evidence underpinning the link between those unusually large-scale street protests or "smart-mobs" actions and the reconstruction of social memory of 1989, such young movements *per se* have indicated the post-1989's generation is forming, almost ten years after 1989.[143]

On the other hand, in most instances, those young NSO activists are the group whose role are underscored in creating "good ideas" or "innovators" in NSO-based NSMs, e.g. Wang Yi's "equilibrium principle" and his suggestion of "coalition of e-forums". The "good ideas" involve the knowledge of truth, memory, social category, tactics, and theories, etc, which might contain foresight of opportunity space of civil society movement. As Michel Foucault asserts, knowledge is a form of power and power is a form of knowledge, especially in China "while cultural producers and intellectuals do not play any substantive role in policy formulation, they do have the capacity to influence policy *interpretation* and *implementation*" (Keane, 2001).

They therefore fall in Rutten and Baud's category of public intellectuals or "movement intellectuals" who "carve out discursive spaces and 'invent' new political discourses for emerging social movements" and "emerge in the development of social movements and include core activists and leaders" (Rutten and Baud, 2004:197). Significantly, the diffusing of "good ideas" and the claim-making of constructive opposition relies heavily on a heterarchical network – an information flow derived from e-forums or "electronic-grassroots" (Castells, 1996: 354; here abbreviated as e-grassroots), to be illustrated in the next chapter.

At this moment, few would deny that China's NSOs and NSO contentious politics are forging an alternative group of public intellectuals, who are differentiated from conventional intellectuals in the 1980s. The latter, as McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly (2001) formulated, whose democracy

[143] Correspondingly, Martin Kohli (1996) observed in the mid-1990s that there were few meaningful young movements in Eastern and Central Europe. Hence, in Kohli's view, it was hard to take the 1989's generation for granted in these countries.

movement in 1989 had significant connections between the elites and popular contention, failed to form the elite-mass solidarity and thus were confined to the "regime defection" of the authoritarian regime (McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly, 2001: 218, 222).

However, Mannheim's interest of political generation seems bound to "formative years" when people "develop a common consciousness – the shared consciousness of being a generation – and then to become unified as a political actor" (Kohli, 1996:2). Especially when confronted with the age gap between those NSM intellectuals and actual generation of 1989, neither Mannheim nor Schuman and Scott's rediscovery of Mannheim appear to fully account for the reversing formation of political generation as the reconstruction of collective memory suggests.

5.3.3.2 After 1989: from resocialization to legitimization

Distinct from Schuman and Scott's (1989) finding of the role of social events in shaping collective memory, for those young public (NSO/NSM) intellectuals, the 1989 movement is only a part of the past events they experienced during their adolescence, when these teenagers were kept at a relative distance from the democratic movements to varying degrees. No wonder, the memory gap formed after 1989, when the propaganda (brain-wash) movement launched by Party-state left nothing but fragmented and separated pieces of personal memories, after I makeup the widely shared images of 1989 from those respondents.[144]

That is to say, for the whole "die Generation der 89er" who ranged from 13 to 30 in 1989 as Claus Leggewie (1995) defined, there emerges a generational "breakdown" in "life course". If not being "stummed" or exiled (Fewsimith, 2001b), those who experienced the 1989 movement had changed to be pragmatic and depoliticized in the 1990's market economy and under the authoritarian coercive, as Song's experience in the labour camps shows. For those who were under 18 years in 1989, the reconstruction of personal memory deserves to repair their socialization after a depoliticized decade, or more precisely, a resocialization in the reverse direction.

[144] See also S. Rosen (1993).

By Searle's notion of Background capacities, the "breakdown" of socialization means "the pervasiveness of the boundary" (Searle, 1992:139), for instance Wang was awared befooled after 1989 and then doubted the "deceitful world of adults".[145] From this arousing moment, the subjective roots of oppositional consciousness in the new generation of liberal intellectuals began to be "sedimented". Nevertheless, this still seemed to be a "precarious entity" during the depoliticized decade but ready to invite further legitimation and institutionalization.

According to Berger and Luckmann (1967), the "Legitimation as a process is best described as a 'second order' objectivation of meaning, and the function of legitimation is to make objectively available and subjectively plausible the 'first order' objectivations that have been institutionalized" (Berger and Luckmann, 1967: 110). The first order here corresponds to the pro-democracy tradition of the old generation of liberal intellectuals of the 1980s, while the second order is reflected in the revised constructive oppositional consciousness and associated civil rights movements surging after 1998.

The legitimation process therefore can be understood in Searle's perspective as the re-socialization process of Wang and of a whole younger generation via the Internet and Internet-based NSOs after 1998, arousing them and cultivating their Background capacities, enabling linguistic interpretation to take place, facilitating certain kinds of readiness, and disposing them to certain sorts of behaviour (Searle, 1995:133-137).

While the Internet and Internet-based NSOs repaired the social memory of 1989 after 1998/1999, some Internet/NSOs activists began to see themselves being in an "intellectuals (Internet) guerrilla warfare", a widely circulated metaphor in Chinese cyberspace.[146] Then, mediated

[145] Supra note 133.

[146] Likewise, we can find analogous phenomenon of "Red Hack Union" in Chinese cyberspace. Such actions are labeled as Hacktivism or "Network Army", and described as "… a collection of communities and individuals who are united on the basis of ideology, not geography. They are held together by public communications, the Internet being a prime example…. Network armies don't have a formal leadership structure. They have influencers, not bosses who give orders". (Holstein, W. J. 2002, "Online, the Armies Have No Borders." New York Times ; recited from Bennet (2003))

by the conception of "intellectuals guerrilla warfare" in the Internet era, they established a shared ideological basis through which they generalized the resistance consciousness and the project identity and then converted themselves from Internet activists into new public intellectuals.

Vis-à-vis the sense of Internet activists in casual use, the categorization of new public intellectuals takes over the social role and social responsibility of conventional intellectuals, means a more constructive and pragmatic orientation in defining an independent public sphere, particularly, in the ways of spanning whatever institutional and social boundaries the generalization (institutionalization) processes of public intellectuals would confront, like official ideology, propaganda, Internet censorship, barriers of NGOs, and social control, etc. That is, the very subjective roots of oppositional consciousness embedded in the NSMs surging after 2003.

On this basis of collective identity, it is fair to say a new political generation of public intellectuals in Gramsci's sense has come into being. And then, one can identify them from the "fourth generation" of young intellectuals in the 1980s as the "fifth generation".[147] In short, they share common generational feature as follows:

- They were teenagers when Tian'anmen democratic movement occurred in 1989;
- They share oppositional consciousness against CCP's authoritarian governance;
- They are NSO activists, and participate in NSO-based "asserting rights movements";

However, the Internet guerilla war involved in China is specifically related to cyberprotests against authoritarianism. In the global view, Manuel Castells argues Mexico's *Zapatistas* may be labeled the first informational guerilla movement. See Castells ([1997] 2004).

In the Chinese context, philosophist Prof.Liu Xiaofeng cited Carl Schmitt ([1963], 2004) and introduced the concept of "intellectuals guerrilla war" into China's liberal intellectuals circle in the early years of 21st century. In a post of Xianzhenglunhen BBS in 2003 (e-forum of constitutional politics, founded by Wang Yi and Chen Yongmiao, underwent over eight closures by the authorities, and is currently unavailable), we can see the first use of this term to label currently Internet resistance actions against authoritarian institutions.

Then, by means of the spill-over of Liu's idea of intellectual guerrillas in Schmitt's ([1963] 2004) sense, the interesting ideological links among Internet activists and public intellectuals and boundary mechanism have been established. Nevertheless, among this spill-over process, the Internet networks might just reflect the offline communication and networks. Further discussion is required in the remaining.

[147] See Ruth Cherrington (1997). She borrowed Zhang and Cheng's concept "*Di Si Dai Ren* (The Fourth Generation, 1988)" to describe the "reform intellectuals" in 1980s, and verified a social gap between these 1980s intellectuals and the mass, according to her fieldwork before 1989's pro-democracy movement.

- They rely heavily on the Internet and Internet-based communications and communities;
- They are inter-connected via Internet or offline links and then form a loosely connected social network.

5.3.3.3 China's NSO Activists: a self-categorized generation

The above resocialization processes represent the repairing of collective memory about the 1989 movement on the one hand as the subjective roots of the formation of a new generation of movement intellectuals in present-day China. On the other, the social grouping on a social psychological level of these NSO activists or new generation of public intellectuals appears to be a self-categorization process, a social identity theory developed by John Turner and his colleagues (Turner et al., 1987).

In simple terms, categorization is the process that people use to understand things: They work out what some thing is by deciding what it is similar to and what it is different from (McGarty, 1999). Furthermore, the self-categorization "specifies the operation of social categorization process as the cognitive basis of group behaviour…as embodiments of the relevant prototype – a process of depersonalization…It produces…normative behaviour … cooperation and altruism, emotional contagion and empathy, collective behaviour, shared norms, and mutual influence". (Hogg and Terry, 2000:123) The metaphor of "Sons of June 4th", for instance, may be understood as the representation of the categorization:

(1) Wang's identity of the group ("Sons of June 4th ") *per se* means a result of depersonalization;

(2) The 1989's intellectuals as a group thus represents the prototype "stored and constructed" (Hogg and Terry, 2000: 124) during the grouping of successors;

(3) It is Wang and other young liberal intellectuals themselves who define them post-1989 generation, a self-defined social category or "political generation" in Mannheim's terms.

Here, Wang used categories of "1989's" and "Sons of June 4th" in distinguishing and building connections between two generations of liberal intellectuals. Retrospectively summing up the conclusions of previous chapters, one can easily define the latter, a new generation of young liberal intellectuals in Wang's term, referring to as a community of NSO activists who share a common identity of the 1989 movement, oppositional consciousness, and involvement in ongoing NSMs that correspond to two dimensions of structuration respectively: (i) the making of agents-in-focus, and (ii) the growing of social networks of NSOs and NSMs.[148]

Likewise, prior to the "Sons of June 4th ", the formation of China's NGO sector as a whole in the 1990s had just experienced a similar self-categorization process. The concept and form of "NGO" were used to differentiate from conventional SOs, to attract those potential participants and sponsors who intended to remain distanced from official institutions, and to signal the depoliticization to expand space for organizational development, as FON's case shows.

Compared to Charles Tilly's "category produced opportunity structure" where "their (categorical) boundaries do crucial organizational work" (Tilly, 1998: 6), which seems unable to fully account for the structuration process especially the two moves from e-forum-based NSOs and ENGOs respectively toward "asserting rights NSOs" as Figure 4.3 shows, the creation of categories *per se* may be seen as the source of opportunity structure in a transformational society.

On the one hand, some new social boundaries were created, spread and constructed by NSO's identity entrepreneurs by means of Internet-based discourse and networking, from virtual communities to NSO sector. Analogous to Turner et al.'s (1987) principle of metacontrast, these new categories breached all sorts of existing social boundaries and formed a new system of categorical rhetoric—mainly around the boundaries between society and state, from the

[148] In Stones' (2005) framing of "quadripartite nature of structuration", the internal structure and agent's practices jointly locate in between that of the external structure and outcomes of structuration, highlighting the "agent-in-focus" in "position-practice relation". In the long run, such "position-practice relation" is what Giddens called "institutionalized structural properties" of stabilized relationships among agents/actors across time and space" (Giddens, 1984: xxxi, Italic added). That is to say, the formation of agent-in-focus per se may contain the origin of structure evolution. It suggests two dimensions in NGOs-derived structuration process: agent-in-focus, and network growing.

conventional definition of SOs to the three categories of citizenship: civil rights, social rights, and political rights in T.H. Marschall's terms.[149]

Strictly speaking, though the officially defined category of SOs has induced the platformalization of NGOs, it is the newly emerged social categories that are gaining increasing social influence by means of Internet-based discourse and then substantially creating new legitimacy and social space for NSOs, such as "social vulnerable groups", "migrant workers", "laid-off workers" and such like. They eventually induced a paralleling structural change:

- China's NGOs transformed themselves into various "asserting rights organizations", as the case of FON shows;
- and the emergence of de-radicalized oppositional consciousness among NSO activists and identity entrepreneurs, as the cases of Song and Wang show.

On the other hand, the Internet-based communication and network eventually formed a self-categorization structure of NSO agents, involving threefold identity building:

- the reconstruction of collective memory of the 1989 movement;
- the new generation of liberal intellectuals;
- and then the group of NSO activists.

During these morphogenetic processes of collective identity of NSOs, the reconstruction of collective memory of 1989's movement is central in the above structuration, as the shared cognition for everyone who is involved in NSOs or NSMs, highlighting Lewis Coser's notion that "Memories of important political and social events are structured by age, in particular younger age" (Coser, 1992:29).

[149] See Figure 4.5, the diagram of contentious politics. Likewise, Postmes and colleagues (1998) also addressed the power of computer-mediated communication (CMC) in breaching or building social boundaries in perspective of social identity model of deindividuation effects (SIDE-effect). It is exactly what Elizabeth Losh (2005) named "Virtualpolitik" in the CMC era.

Henceforth, I observed, the generation network came into being. It has profoundly strengthened the intra-group relations and seemingly taken over the central network of NSOs. Consequently, one can expect that it will increasingly expand the inter-group connections with other groups, especially the conventional intellectuals or those who share the same aging characteristics but render themselves in a depoliticized world.

In short, the self-categorization of the new generation of young liberal intellectuals should be deemed as an important structuration during the formation of the structure of NSO agents, which happened to China's NSOs from 1998 to 2003. Only now, Tilly's "category produced opportunity structure" appears to make sense for China's NSOs.

Summary: As Mazur rightly observed an implicit "public space (in China's urban life) to remember the dead" which was involved "dissidents, university academics, bureaucrats, entrepreneurs, professionals, retired political and military elites or other types" (Mazur 1999: 1018-33), the above investigation and discussions have examined another public space – where the Internet (CMC/ICTs) in the past decade had "altered our sense of boundaries, participation, and identity" (Shumar and Renninger, 2002:14) of social organization in China on three layers:

(1) How online discussion groups evolved to e-civil society organizations;
(2) How online discourse moderated the oppositional consciousness; and then
(3) How the new generation of young public intellectuals formed via Internet-based collective repairing of social memory of the democratic movement in 1989.

Indeed, these three layers demonstrate an emerging "oppositional culture" cultivated in association with the rise of Internet-based NSOs. Through which, a three-layer "subjective" structure of NSOs is constructed accordingly. Accordingly, one can say,

(1) The form of e-forum-based e-civic associations has maximized the boundary-spanning as the "de-institutionalized" platformalization of formal NGOs intended;

(2) The maturation of "rational oppositional consciousness" also maximized the space of NSOs under restrictive control; and

(3) The self-categorization as the "Son of June 4th" of new generation of liberal intellectuals (also NSO activists and movement intellectuals) not only defines the subjectivity of types of actors for probable typification, but also fills the cognitive gap of the depoliticized decade of the 1990s.

However, the Internet-based social construction of NSOs is but one expression of the increasing social differentiation inside and outside cyberspace, as Castells refered to the "culture of real virtuality" (Castells, [1996] 2000: 402) such as, the phenomena of the segmentation of the Internet users and then the completion of oppositional consciousness, and the heterarchical structure of whole NSO network.

In addition to this categorization, by way of habitualization of Internet-based communicative actions, the objectivation of NSOs transforms them towards "asserting rights" NSOs. That is the emerging "asserting rights movements", undertaking the task of generalizing the meaning of the above "rational oppositional consciousness" during the mobilization. The following chapter attempts to further these dynamic processes.

Chapter 6

NSOs AND NEW SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

Politicization and new contentious politics

> "…democratization is a change in the character of relations between people subject to the authority of a given government and agents of that of that government."
>
> --- Charles Tilly (2004:68)

Following the line of "communication-network-agents", Chapter 5 focuses on the structural effects of Internet-based communication. It also outlines the twofold internal structuration of NSOs over the past decade: the primary institutionalizing of communication networks, namely the rise of e-civic associations; and the self-categorization of NSO's agents. They resulted in the dual structures of virtual communities and Internet activists as the second-order structural properties of further structuration.

This chapter turns to the politicization of NSOs—the interpenetration between internal and external structuration of NSOs under the twofold frame of "citizenship-social movements" (see Figure 2.2 and Figure 3.4), namely the interpenetration between NSOs and authoritarian system that correspond to the theoretically dualism division of civil society and political society as previously states. In practice, the politicization of NSOs refers to the emerging "asserting rights movements" in which NSOs are involved as SMOs have become the new form and carrier of the contentious politics in urban China since 2003.

6.1 The Rise of e-Social Movements and Activism

Internet-based communication since 1998 is amongst the most amazing changes occurring within the urban space in China. As a cultural expression of social differentiation, namely the heterotopia, it also induces and accounts for structural differentiation between Internet-based NSOs and formal NGOs.

Analogous to the dynamics of the world-wide Internet network societies from which the global social movements emerged (Castells, [1996] 2000), the virtual communities in China's cyberspace, especially those emerging Internet-based NSOs, also involved a politicization of NSOs in practice which interpenetrated the two-level boundaries between the cyberspace and the physical world, and between the NSO sector and the authoritarian regime.

Structurally, this politicization can be observed and phased into two patterns over time: the e-social movements or online protests since early 2002; and the new social movements since 2003. They represent a new modality of structuration crossing space-time—the "asserting rights movements"—and contain a twin process in association with the internal and external structuration: the formation of activism; and the movement of NSOs.

Different from McAdam, McCarthy and Zald's (1988) various accounts of individual activism, the formation process of the activism of the "asserting rights movements" seems close to Luhmann's theory that is applied in the Internet era that "every communication invites protest" and "an autopoietic system does not end through its actual activity, but goes on" (Luhmann, [1984] 1995:173,169), as though a substantial change in "linguistically generated intersubjectivity" (Habermas, 1987). Via the temporal linkage of selective events, it eventually shaped the schemas of moderated oppositional consciousness of NSO activists and then politicized NSOs by spanning boundaries of concrete citizenship. Citizenship here as the third modality of NSO structuration provides a framing of opportunity structure of NSOs and "asserting rights movement", enabling NSOs to gain more legitimacy and social supports through the social movements.

6.1.1 Online Posting as Cyberprotest

As previously mentioned, there are two ways to arrive at the institutionalizing organization in Nan Lin's (2002) sense. The one is the formalization and then legalization of organizations in opposition to the de-organization tendency (such as platformalization oriented legitimation); the other one is

the move of "habitualization", representing the constructivism institutionalization. Institutions here refer to "a form of shared collective intentionality" in anthropologist Gifford's (1999) view of the evolution of cultural institution.

In light of Schutz (see Schutz, 1962, 1967), the habitualization as an evolutionary process or specific culture or a specific form of institutionalization, in which "behaviours that have been developed empirically and adopted by an actor or set of actors in order to solve recurring problems" (Tolbert and Zucker, 1994), "does not require conscious construction, but simply that the individuals involved are able to perceive the advantages of adopting a particular behaviour, even if the initial generation of the behaviour was accidental" (Gifford, 1999:140). Both organizational (or institutional) inertia and innovations may be thus attributed to some habitualized behaviour formed at the outset of the evolutionary process.

On the other hand, in Luhmann's communication theory, "communication transforms the difference between information *and* utterance into the difference between acceptance *or* rejection of the utterance, thus transforming 'and' into 'or'" (Luhmann, [1984] 1995:149; Italic original). Communication creates a social situation inviting protests where "every asserting provokes its contrary". More importantly, the difference between the communicative actions of acceptance and rejection built into linguistic communication leads to a temporal transformation toward reflexivity as the compensation for the "risk of greater complexity and sharper selectivity" (ibid: 151-157).

Such a reflexivity outcome of the self-referential processes of communication may account for the early mentioned rise of LOH in opposition to FON and the "Hope Project" and Wang Yi's "principle of voice equilibrium" as a specific case of moderated oppositional consciousness. Likewise, one can find a habitualized behaviour accordingly from the ten-year "participatory culture" of e-forums and webblogs – the posting, a basic form and unit of utterance in e-forum-based communication since the very beginning, which mediates and is routinized by "acceptance or rejection" during online discussion. Without the continuous posting posters by e-forum

viewers/users, neither the tribulization of e-forums or the formation of e-forum-based NSOs would have been possible, nor the institutionalisation of LOH and the construction of the collective identity that emerged could ever have been envisaged.

The posting behaviour in pratice is inter-induced and then self-habitulized over time. According to the occurring sequence, they can be differentiated into initial posts and subsequent postings. The initial posts refer to the first post published by any one of the e-forum users in launching or raising questions about personal arguments or reviews, functioning as the low thresholds of thematization and inducing additional postings which are submitted for review by other e-forum viewers. The later additions simply update and endorse the themes that are formulated by the initial postings or showed countering arguments.

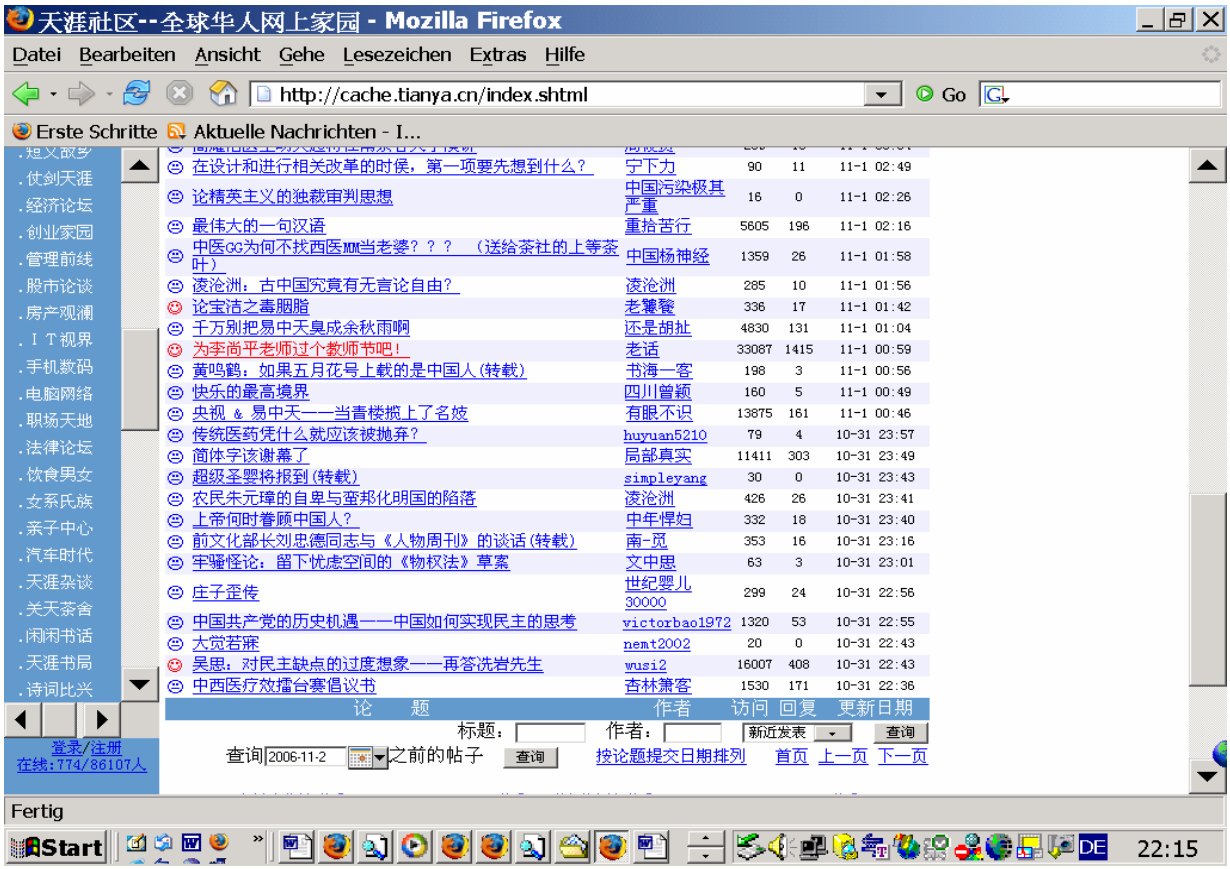

Figure 6.1: The frontpage of Guantian Teahouse e-forum on November 1, 2006.
Source: A screenshot from http://cache.tianya.cn/index.shtml on November 1, 2006.
Note: The highlighted post in red titled with "Have a good time with Li Shangpin on Teacher Day", located in the middle of this page, is just one of those derived from the initial posts of Shen Yachuan's initial post, which was published on ***August 20,2002*** but remained updated recent posting, such as that of ***November 1, 2006***. This screenshot shows a record of over 30,000 views and 1,415 subsequent posts, despite many of them having been deleted during the past four years (see Appendix III).

Therefore just through the behaviour of "publishing posts", the difference between acceptance and objection emerges around certain points of view. If continuous posts concentrate on certain initial posts and then form a relay-like collective behaviour, these themes will eventually become the e-forum opinions or Internet opinions. That is the post or eforum based discourse.

For example, Shen Yachuan (pseudonym as *Shifeike*), a television journalist and internet activist, published a post in Guantian Teahouse e-forum (GT, one of the most influential e-forums in present-day China) since 2003. It was a report of an independent investigation conducted by himself spontaneously, calling for an impartial investigation into the suspicious death of Li Shangping (a country teacher in Hunan province). Shen's initial post created about 4,000 subsequent posts and at least 50,000 views and induced over a dozen of associated initial posts till it was deleted under duress by Tianya company in 2005. Almost each associated initial posts, as well as additional posts, maintained the theme of Li's death, keeping appearing on the frontpage of GT Teahouse e-forum for most of time through to late 2006. (See Figure 6.1, the highlighted post in red, screenshot on November 1, 2006)

6.1.2 Two Variants of Habitualized Posting: in the case of Guantian Teahouse e-forum

Over several years, on the Guantian Teahouse e-forum, one can find a twofold development of the posting-centred participatory culture: the increasing online petitions (joint-letters circulated online) appeared in those online protest posts calling for support for "autonym"; on the other hand, more and more Internet activists and e-forum participators started meeting face-to-face, and this phenomenon became more frequent in some cities.

In short, the habitualized posting as online protest has cultivated two variants: online petitions and offline saloons (gathering). The former has become a basic form of cyberprotests as the cyberactivism fundamental of e-social movements and then "asserting rights movements" (see also Dahlgren et al., 2004). The latter, the offline face-to-face communication is observed that becomes

the crucial mediating form eventually leading to the offline networks and then the prototype of Internet-based NSOs.

To be stressed, the analogous phenomenon of offline communication and networking has not had sufficient attention paid to it for a long time. Only recently, a few scholars have begun to recognize this aspect's influence. For example, regarding the open source communities, O'Mahony and Ferraro (2004) noticed offline networks may affect the evolution and governance of online communities. Likewise, it is not possible to organize the purely e-forum-based e-civic association without the offline-saloons of LOH as illustrated previously, according to Shen.[150]

Regarding the GT Teahouse e-forum, its history can be traced to an early influential website-based online community of "思想的境界". The remarkable predecessor e-forum "Tianya Zhongheng" (a BBS of *Tianya* (*Frontier*) magazine in Haikou city) was among dozens of "pro-free thinking" websites which emerged soon after the "思想的境界" was forcefully closed in 1997, after being on air for less than 13 months. But "Tianya Zhongheng" did not avoid being dissolved either and, in conjunction with hundreds of deviant BBSs and a CCP's fundamentalist magazine *Zhongliu* (中流) under a ban in 2000, as they were involved in the spreading of two public letters which were believed to have written by Deng Liqun (a doctrinist CCP's senior cadre). Nevertheless, a renewed large-scale online society BBS (Tianya Club) successfully raised risk funds and took over the Internet user resources of "Tianya Zhongheng".

Still supported by the server in Haikou, the virtual society of Tianya Club consists of 31 BBS on the main channel, constantly having page views from 10,000 to 200,000 at almost any time point. Guangtian Teahouse (关天茶舍, GT), as one of its most favourable BBS, took over almost all the resource of Tianya Zhongheng since its inception, including *Banzhu* (moderators), frequent users, politicized BBS culture, and was shortly closed several times by the propaganda watchdog.

[150] Supra note 116.

Other e-forums or conventional media become accustomed to re-posting or reprinting featured posts of GT. *Nanfang Weekend*, for instance, one of the most influential print media published in Guangzhou, has a weekly column that collects such featured posts from GT and other influential e-forums. GT's opinion therefore comes into being, and meanwhile reflects to an extent the real public opinion of China. Nevertheless, the petition posts, especially those in form of joint-letter in GT were rarely found reported or cited by conventional media.

6.1.2.1 Online Petition

Among a series of online petitions, the event of Du Daobin occurred in the wake of the first wave of the cyberprotests since 2002 and the rise of the "asserting rights movement" in 2003 and it is supposed to be an episodic transformation during the formation of the new social movements.

Du, known as his pseudonym as *Huanghe Louzhu* (黄喝楼主), currently a cadre of Yingcheng city government in Hubei province, was an early moderator of GT and a well-known Internet activist and for his online reviews on social problems, freedom of press and speech, constitutional institutions, and Falun Gong issues. He was detained by the police since Oct. 28, 2003, and was accused of "inciting to overthrow the government" due to his 12 pieces of Internet articles.[151]

An emergency appeal calling for more signatures for the basic rights of freedom of speech on the Internet was posted on GT e-forum on November 2, 2003. It was drafted by Wang Yi, who was an Internet activist and Internet opinion leader and a close "Internet friend" of Du. According to Liu Xiaobo, one of first 21 signatories, it was within a few days that Du's news was spread over the e-forums and he was telephoned by Ding Zhilin, a "Tian'anmen mother". From this event on, he built direct connections with Yu Jie and Wang Yi, etc. The initiation of that joint letter relied on both online and offline networks and communications, according to Wang Yi.

[151] An earlier yet similar case was of Luo Yongzhong, a disabled bicycle-fixer on the streets in Jilin province, who was found guilty for his two BBS posters in the first half of 2003.

The police involved here known as ""national security police"(国保) in China, has close function to the STASI in former East Germany, or the political police in Japan, or the secret police in Saudi Arabia (known as the *mabahith*).

This post collected 58 initiative co-signatories with autonyms in the first day and then 500 additional signatories in three days. After that, this petition post disappeared but continued on other websites (*http://171.64.233.179*, currently closed). By November 14, 2003, the resulting co-signatories had increased to 1,140.

Likewise, right after the pro-Du Daobin's petition action, Qin Gen, a former democratic activist in the 1989 movement and an Internet activist as an early organizer of the Shanghai-based Guantian offline saloon,[152] launched a one-day hunger protest in mourning on the memorial day (100 days) of Li Siyi's death in September of 2003.[153] Just through his posting on the GT e-forum, his personal protest and posts rightly became a hunger-strike relay, both online and offline, involving over 370 Chinese "internet users/activists" by October 11, 2003.[154]

In the above protest actions, I noticed, most of signatories used autonyms for the first time instead of Internet pseudonyms as they did in earlier online petition actions. Given the coercive terror imposed on Du's expressive actions online, such collective behaviour suggests a significant change: the shift of the boundaries from the virtual community to the real society. From this point, the cyberprotests should not be viewed anymore as merely online protests confined to cyberspace.

6.1.2.2 Offline Saloons

"Let's party!" It was the title of an initial post of GT in the waning of SARS. During the special time of SARS, the level of social activities reduced whilst the Internet communications increased by up to 40% (CNNIC report 2003/07). The voice of numerous postings reflected a strong and prevailing desire for consolidation of GT's identity. But in the perspective of the dynamics of social movement, it indicates the coming of intensive offline actions in August of 2003, after the

[152] He was forced to move to Hainan province around 2003. Song verified Qin had to move to Hainan province by his work unit under pressure imposed by police of Shanghai. See supra note 45, interview with Song.

[153] Li Siyi, a three-year old girl in Chengdu city, died in June 2003, because she was left alone in home after her drug-addicted mother was brought to custody on June 4 2003, but Chengdu's police refused to take care of her. When her mother was released in two weeks, she was found dead from hunger.

[154] See Qin Gen's "A Brief Review of China's Citizen Disobedience Movement in 2003" (2003: 中国公民不服从实践简评), available at: http://hydlily.tianyablog.com/blogger/post_show.asp?BlogID=13441&PostID=478093&idWriter=0&Key=0.

significant progress of online petitions in 2002 and the first half of 2003. An incomplete statistics of GT's offline saloons follows.

DATE	ORGANIZERS (PSEUDONYM)	THEMES	SCALE	LOCATION	REMARK
Jul.11,2003	N.A.	constitutional politics	N.A.	Restaurant	
Jul.26,2003	张祖桦	Dr.于建嵘(political scientist):country crisis	40-50	Café	
Aug.10,2003	陈永苗	Dr.刘军宁(political scientist):rule of law	76	Bar	
Aug.2,2003	王怡,廖亦武	N.A.	30	Teahouse	under surveillance
Jul.19,2003	宋先科	Association, Education, and Urban life	48	Park	
Aug.5,2003	宋先科	杨支柱(academic, internet activist) :supporting Sun Dawu, a private entrepreneur	N.A.	Park	abolished
Oct.27,2002	Xiao Wu(泪眼看人),温克坚	茅于轼(economist):poverty, middle class	App.30	Bar	1st net party of GT
Dec.28,2002	N.A.	Asso.Prof.叶航(economist): social crisis, country problem, moral economics, utilitarianism	N.A.	N.A.	
Jun.28,2003	N.A.	许向阳 (academic):constitutional reform	N.A.	Bar	
Aug.30,2003	Chang Wei(北国飞龙)	Prof.何开荫(academic): country problem and solution	10	Mess Hall in University	
Aug.23,2003	林江仙	political reform	App.30	Hotel	
Apr.18,2003	Lisa(P.)	茅于轼:morals, NGO,Iraq	App.50	Bar	
Jun.28,2003	Qin Gen(心不太急)	陈小平(political scientist): constitutional reform	over 10	Café	
Aug.26,2003	北海舟,温克坚	Citizen education and social transition	over 20	Hotel	
Aug.2,2003	笠笏(P.)	Asso.Prof.张乘健:social consciousness, electricity supply	App.20	Tea Bar	
Aug.9,2003	咬玩(P.)	Prof.贺雪峰(sociologist) :country problem	N.A.	Hotel	
Aug.31,2003	Du Yilong(北冥)	online movements, social problems	26	Bar	

Table 6.1: Offline saloons of GT eforum (2002 – 2003, incomplete).
Source: Collected from posts of GT e-forum.

To be stressed, though they shared highly political themes like social problems, civil rights movement, and political reform, most of above offline saloons appeared in an ironic opposition under restrictive circumstance.[155] Regardless of whatever themes, most of the participants seemed to be joyful to view them as somewhat carnival-liked parties and emphasize the non-organization and non-politicized aspects. They often pretended to be self-disciplined that limited their gatherings to those politically correct topics such as "cynic things like Wind, Flower, Snow and Moon (只谈风花雪月)", "pulling up inner demands (拉动内需)" and "find organizations (找到

[155] According to online observations, almost after each offline saloon there were posts reported being monitored or intercepted by police. In interview with Chen Yongmiao on April 23 2004 and Wang Yi on May 17 2004, Chen and Wang also confirmed this situation. They even sent invitation to the Bureau of National Security to participate in their offline saloons in 2003, said Chen.

组织)". In association with this ironic rhetoric, in most of these cases, each with about 30-to-50 participants, these saloons were held in Cafés, bars, teahouses, restaurant, and bookstores, often beginning with academic speeches on social issues but ending with alcohol and banquets.

By early 2006, when the second round of fieldwork was conducted in the above offline saloon locations, most of Guantian offline saloons were frequently held through 2004 and 2005 under coercive menace but remained in at least three cities, Shanghai, Beijing, and Chengdu. In terms of platformalization, it is fair to categorize such routinized offline saloons as Internet-based NSOs. Their lack of formal organization may be attributed to the same reasoning of the platfomalization of formal NGOs as previously elaborated – the de-institutionalization as the response of restrictive control of association.

In summary, the habitualization of posting-derived two communicative actions – the online protest and offline saloon – might be the most important "objectified" features of China's e-forums. Paralleling with the formation of "subjective" structures of rational consciousness and a new generation of public intellectuals, it is proposed to be a crucial structuration process leading to further structuration of NSOs toward new social movements, Internet-based NSOs, and NSO networks.

6.1.3 Cyberprotest Waves

Beginning in the second half of the 1990s, various civic petitions or "rightful resistance" in O'Brien and Kevin's term (1996) surged widely in China and came into scholars' viewsight (see also O'Brien, 2002), but they were seldom regarded as an emerging social movement or even part of a social movement. Meanwhile, few people connected them with another "political petition", which occasionally took place in the 1990s. These petition actions mainly depended on the conventional communication forms of joint-letters and international media, and was thus confined to Chinese intellectual circles and political dissidents.

In this context, the newly influential "online petitions" with distinctive e-grassroots and social influence as the former petition for Du Daobin shows, began politicizing China's Internet and then reshaped the contentious politics, because as anthropologist David Hakken (2002:364) holds such cyberprotest actions by their political nature encompass and then penetrate the boundaries of virtual communities. The online petition actions represent the basic form of e-social movements in present-day urban China.

6.1.3.1 Online Petitions in 2002

The online petition can be traced back to 2002. In 2002, there were at least five influential on-line petitions, constituting both the starting point and episodic events of the e-social movements in China.[156]

1) Opposing the "Regulation of Software". The restrictive regulation, enacted at the end of 2001, deemed all behaviours of using piracy software as torts. It resulted in an online petition letter co-signed by Prof. Cui Zhiyuan, Fang Xingdong, and Prof. Wang Dingding, etc. This online petition, being circulated in China's e-forums and documented by a book *I Oppose* edited by some of the above petitioners, went on throughout the whole of 2002 and later spilled over to the print media. Developed to November 2002, by a judicial review released by the Supreme Court of the PRC, the definition of tortfeaso of intellectual property rights relating to the use of piracy software was revised to a limited range that the non-profit use by institutional and individual users was excluded from the regulation.

2) Following the voice of "I Oppose", the "Provisional Regulation of Internet Publication" was objected to by an online petition with a more violent dichotomy. This regulation was jointly released by the Ministry of Informational Industry and the National Agency of Press and Publication in July 2002, and intended to censor all internet activities in the name of "regulation

[156] These cases were also filed by Wang Yi's review, "Intellectuals' Choice—The Wave of Online Jointly Signed Letter in 2002", *Guancha*, on 03.01.2003, available at: http://www.secretchina.com/news/articles/3/1/4/31625.html.

of publication". Mr. Du Daobin was just one of the two main launchers of this public letter which raised over 200 co-signatories from "net friends" and circulated via emails and relay postings on some e-forums.

3) After the "Tian'anmen Mothers", victims, and relatives of victims of the Tian'an Men massacre sent out a public letter to the Central Committee of CCP (114 co-signatures in total), four liberal celebrity (Liu Xiaobo, Liao Yiwu, Yu Jie and Mao Yushi) spread their open letter via the Internet with a political assertion that claimed to officially redress and compensate the victims. It is the first time that victims, political dissidents, famed intellectual and writers, Internet activist joined a striking cyberprotest action post-1989.

4) An online plea calling for the exemption of the Living Buddha Tenzin Delek Rinpoche (阿安扎西) from the death penalty. This Tibetan Living Buddha was accused of being the plotter of a series of terrorist actions, including an explosion in Chengdu city in June 2002. Prior to the secondary trial, Wang Yi posted a joint letter on his GT-derived e-forum (the Constitutional Forum, 宪政论衡) calling for an impartial and transparent trial.[157] This joint letter collected supports from twenty-four lawyers, liberal intellectuals, professionals and students, some of whom contributed the legal aid action via organizing independent defence counsels. On January 26, 2003, the secondary (final) trial of the Higher Court of Sichuan province kept the death penalty but with a two-year stay of execution, and this was revised it to a lifetime in jail in January 2005. Nevertheless, in the first half of 2003, two petitioners underwent pressures – Liao Yiwu was interrogated several times by the police, and Wang Lixiong was forced to leave FON after March 2003.

5) The "Stainless campaign". "Stainless Mouse", originally a role of a science fiction novel and also the pseudonym of Liu Di (a girl student of Beijing Normal University) in e-forums (mainly

[157] This letter was firstly posted on Guantian Teahouse eforum but remained less than two days, and finally achieved 147 signatures. See also the archive file collected by China Monitor, available at: http://www.chinamonitor.org/news/news/azhaxi.htm.

Ruisi BBS), was arrested at the end of 2002 because of her ironical posts calling for "organizing online political party" and "offline communicative activities". Soon after this piece of news was confirmed and spread over Chinese cyberspace, I observed, many e-forum users added a "stainless" prefix to their pseudonym to express their protests.[158] Developed to the January of 2003, it raised a "Yellow Ribbon Action" backed by a special website gathering online support and updated news about Liu till she was released in November that year without punishment.[159]

6.1.3.2 Structural Features of Cyber Protests

From the perspective of symbolic and institutional boundaries, one can find some shared features and structural links from these cyber-protest actions:

(1) Beginning with the resistance action against the censorship in cyberspace, the increasingly explicit regulative boundaries (around the freedom and space of) the Internet fuelled a wave of cyberprotests in 2002. Yet, in the following years, as the cases of Du Daobin and Liu Di showed, almost every time when the authorities attempted to strengthen the regulations over concrete expressive actions of Internet users, it seemed easily to induce radical collective actions in Internet users, regardless of whether these restrictive measures were made by central government or local governments or Party's agencies (e.g. propaganda agency).

Nevertheless, they seemed to achieve very limited success, with the exception of the release of Liu Di after about one-year of being detained, while most of the governmental policies and measures were finally enacted in practice. In terms of opportunity space, one therefore should keep the point in mind that the rise of e-social movements as a part of new social movements in the following years is not in association with the absence of repression. Rather, it demonstrates an

[158] Supra note 133, note 156. Wang Yi viewed such "stainless action" as an alternative campaign, also a climax for 2002's petition wave.

[159] See the special issue website established in January 2003 for collecting pro-"Stainless Mouse" signatures, available at http://171.64.233.179 (closed currently). Liu was released on parole on Nov.28, 2003, after jailed 12 months and 21 days in total without a trial and just before Premier Schröder visited China on December 1, 2003. A little bit earlierly, "Stainless Mouse" was the only specific Chinese who was mentioned in the forth conversation of "Rule of Law" between Chinese and German governments in early November at Berlin

endogenous activism embedded in the Internet networks and Internet-based communicative behaviours. However, such activity derived from Internet and communication technology (ICT) use is also labelled "cyberactivism" by McCaughey and Ayers (2003).

(2) On the other hand, from the starting point of "defending the Internet", almost all the above cyberprotest actions were fuelled by the authoritarian measures or actions related to concrete civil rights. Consequently, these protest events led to visible results – the "politicization of private life" in McAdam and his colleagues' terms (see McAdam, MaCarthy and Zald, 1988: 701): the public sphere of the Internet were thus "inter-penetrated" by the governmental attempts to enforce specific regulative boundaries and corresponding response by Internet activists who resorted to concrete claims of citizenship as the basis of protests.

- Firstly, using the perspective of content analysis, the former two campaigns against the regulation of the Internet is found to presume the existence of a certain space and of a freedom of expression within cyberspace, which was created by spontaneously ICT-based communicative actions and thus was worth defending;
- Likewise, the latter two protests calling for justice for the Living Buddha Tenzin Delek Rinpoche and Liu Di were targeting the existing regulative boundaries of the policing system and the judicial institutions;
- Third, the joint letter relating to the "Tian'anmen Mothers" politicized the civil claims of the victims of "June 4th" event via the form of public protest (nevertheless bound to cyberspace), for it penetrated the symbolic boundaries of this political taboo after 13 years since 1989.

(3) Amongst the participants of the first-year protest actions, one can identify, on the one hand those liberal intellectuals within conventional intellectuals in the Chinese context, such as famed intellectuals (e.g. Prof. Wang Dingding), political dissidents (e.g. freelance writer Wang Lixiong), professionals; on the other hand, while they as a whole seemed confined to the "political

pragmatism" (Chan, 1999), the Internet activists appeared to be an independent new group involved in petition actions from about 2002-2003 on.

As mentioned, some people who were among the active Internet writers and e-forum moderators (or Internet opinion leaders as previously mentioned) in the early years of the 21st century, appeared repeatedly on the above five joint letters as initial launchers or key participators such as Chen Yongmiao (Fujian), Du Daobin (Hubei), Liu Di (Beijing), Qin Gen (Shanghai), Ran Yunfei (Sichuan), Ren Bumei (Beijing), Shi Tao (Hunan) Wang Yi (Sichuan), Wen Kejian (Zhejiang), Xiao Han (Beijing) and Yu Jie (Beijing).

In their view, these actions constituted by episodic events, were intended as a continuous process with the explicit purposes of "accumulating moral and legitimate resources for liberalists such as ourselves".[160] Subsequently, they appeared frequently in far more online petition actions in the next few years. Some of them were jailed due to their online expressive actions (e.g. Shi Tao, Liu Di, Du Baobin) and then they are regarded by the international media as political dissidents.[161]

6.1.3.3 Habitualization as Cyberactivism

From the first wave of online petition actions surged since 2002, the above three folds of structural features point to the cyberactivism, which may provide the micro-level reasoning of subsequent cyber-protests and further social movements in subsequent years.

The concept of cyberactivism or online activism, can be regarded as a specific development of "ICTs politics" which has seen a rich seam of literature about the new contentious politics by means of ICT in the past decade (see Bentivegna, 2006). Since Manuel Castells who first noted Mexico's Zapatistas as the first informational guerrilla movement, ICTs is linked more with cyber protests in the context of social movements (see van de Donk et al., 2004) and in particular with

[160] Supra note 133.

[161] Supra note 159, see also page 150 and footnote 162.

the anti-globalization movement and then global activism in recent years (Bennett, 2003), in parallel with the line of the "cybering democracy" (Saco, 2002) or "electronic agora" (Rheingold, 1993).

If, using the perspective of the interpenetration of the Internet and existing politics, people may concentrate on the relationship between the Internet and social movements, i.e. whether the cyberprotest is the extension of existing social movements or originated from the Internet. It has been reflected in the controversial discussions and enriched multi-discipline literatures on the ICT's influence on participation in social movements and political participation (see Garrett, 2006).

The cyberactivism in this context provides a micro reasoning of individual recruitment in the informational age – accounting for online participation, the power struggle for a larger range of control and resistance between the power elite and the public. In general, as Vegh formulated, there are three-fold areas where the cyberactivism has been engaged: awareness/advocacy, organization/mobilization, and action/reaction. Global cyberactivism can thus be understood as the "progressive steps of online activism leading from basic information seeking and distribution to online direct action, better known as 'hacktivism'" (Vegh, 2003:71).

Particularly, in a recent PhD dissertation titled "Hacktivism and the Future of Political Participation", the performative hacktivism is distinguished as a specific cyberprotest according to the origin (the hacker-programmer or activists' worlds) and orientation (transgressive or outlaw) of various hacktivisms, "which consists of legally nebulous actions like virtual sit-ins and web site parodies" (Samuel, 2004). Samuel's description of hacktivism thus offers structural evidence at a micro level – that cyberactivism may stem from the Internet-based and habitualized communicative actions.

Likewise, linking the foregoing habitualized posting and its variants of online petition and offline saloons in the case of Guantian Teahouse e-forum, I propose that the first wave of online petitions fuelled in the year of 2002 in China depended on the habitualization of posting.

In most instances, the cyberprotests are actually the issue-based reactions in response to a specific authority's policy and actions in pursuit of tightening the space of the Internet or repressing Internet activists, the habitualized posting thus undertakes a crucial politicization due to the shift of issues, the pooling of posts, and the duration of discourse, through which the habitualized posting of individual Internet users transform to the expressive collective actions. At this time, governments become one of the parties or macro-political factor relating to the Internet users during their utterance by posting – analogous to the situation in Tilly's view of the rise of social movements (Tilly, 2003: 609), no matter whether such repressions are undertaken by the Party's propaganda agency, information administrators, or local governments and police.

In these online protests, the postings here function as the symbolic cause of the habitualized freedom of Internet (both themes and behaviour) arousing the awareness of Internet users and then mobilizing the reaction in pursuit of "defending the Internet" or "Electronic Civil Disobedience", as well as what the claim "I Oppose" asserts. The associated cyberprotest actions in consecutive years after 2003, such as the boycott action against Yahoo,[162] the online petition in support of Du Daobin, and such like, all seem to fit Polanyi's "social self-protection" principle (Polanyi, [1957] 2001), and thus highlight the widely existing subjectivity consciousness of vitual communities and associated impacts on the real society.

The formation of the posting-derived cyberactivism thus apparently differentiates from the transgressive hacktivism or the "A" strategy of cyber-activism formulated by Rucht (2004) which consists of "attack, adjustment and/or alternatives", appearing to be the "P" model that consists of "posting, pooling and petition".

Pooling, mediating the occasional posting behaviour and collective actions of petition, occurs after the habitualized posting have congregated a small group of "Internet utterancers" who frequently participate discussions in those e-forums which are established by or moderated by the

[162] Cf. an open letter drafted by Liu Xiaobo on Oct.7, 2005, in which Liu detailed the cyberprotest against Yahoo due to Shi Tao's case, available at: http://cicus.org/news/newsdetail.php?id=5421.

Internet activists in most of cases, the Internet activists tend to use IMS (Instant Messenger System), email, and telephone to establish stable contact with the "Internet utterancers". As almost all interviewed Internet activists verified, it is a key method and step through which the "Internet utterancers" transformed to the Internet activists and then the inter-connection in the real life among them are established.

Therefore, the petition can be regarded as an organized and politicized repeat of posting. Over time, the repeated online petitions self-enforce and re-habitualize the habitualization of postings, making the posting behaviour a part of everyday life and then the cyberprotest culture of online petition for those Internet activists and users. An example is the "Constitutional Forum", an independent e-forum attached to Guantian Teahouse and initiated by Chen Yongmiao and Wang Yi in 2003. It had been closed by force at least 9 times by the end of 2004. The final website was even ironically renamed as www.xianzheng9.com, relying on an overseas server in North America. Another e-forum, perhaps the most influential political-issue e-forum in China, the "Democracy and Freedom" e-forum, established on June 12, 2001, has been re-established and then banned 48 times up to July 16, 2006. This is despite of the fact that this e-forum changed websites and host servers many times and three moderators have also been jailed.[163]

In fact, in the following years from 2003 to 2006, the Internet-circulated joint-letter functioned as perhaps the most important contentious form for NSOs (email, webblog, news group, etc., here can thus be viewed the associated forms of postings). The special website "Qian Ming Wang", which is sponsored by San Francisco-based "Foundation For China in the 21st Century" and used for launching public letters and raising co-signatories, has accomplished at least 48 joint letters just within the overall year of 2005.[164]

[163] See news reports of VOA, available at: http://www.voanews.com/chinese/archive/2006-07/w2006-07-17-voa39.cfm ; and a brief history of "Democracy and Freedom" eforum, available at: http://www.epochtimes.com/gb/6/7/16/n1387900.htm .

[164] Available at: http://www.qian-ming.net/gb/default.aspx?dir=past

6.2 New Social Movements in the Making

In the previously outlined transformation of whole social organizations in the 1990s, it was assumed that there was no meaningful social movement, in spite of the consumer rights movement which should be no more than an officially mobilized movement supported by the semi-official organizations (Association of Consumer Rights Protection) and governmental organizations (e.g. the Agency of Industry-Commerce Administration). Until recently, the mainstream studies of China's politics still linked the surging petition actions and street actions nationwide with the concept of "informal social movements" and thus overlooked the probable structural changes which might be suggested by the new type of contentious politics in present-day China.[165]

Significantly, having surged since the mid-1990s, these resistance actions range from collective actions of "rightful resistance" to large-scale violent resistance, from women's resistance to ethnic resistance, etc. (e.g. Perry et al., 2000; O'Brien, 1996, 2002; Li and O'Brien, 1996) According to official records, the "collective protest events" nation-wide increased from about 10,000 in 1994 to 58,000 in 2003 and then 74,000 in 2004; only in 2003, for instance, three million protesters were involved in these protests, and the average size of protests increased from eight persons in 1993 to fifty-two.[166]

Having viewed the parallel development of cyber-protests as e-social movements, these distributed and seemingly poorly-organized "rightful resistance" actions which surged in the "real world" thus raise some questions in terms of social movements: whether and to what extent can we see them as social movements? If so, how were NSOs involved in these social movements over the

[165] Li Bingqi's (2004) paper, for instance, put it into the context of social exclusion of urban society. A latest symposium at Hong Kong University in March 2005 significantly highlighted emerging new social movements in present-day China, but noted very limited issues at most arrived a fragmented social movement occasionally happened in separated field.

Such as "Old working class" resistance in Capitalist China (Rocca, 2005), "Migrant workers' striving for autonomy"(Froissart, 2005), "Popular feminist organizing"(Milwertz and Wei, 2005), "Expressing feelings of injustice" (Thireau, 2005), and general discussion about "Religion and social movements in post-Mao China" (Palmer, 2005), etc.

[166] See *South China Morning Post*, December 7, 2005. That news cited Zhou Yongkang's "inner speech" on December 5,2005. Zhou is currently the Minister of Public Security of China. See also Albert Keidel (2005).

past few years? Furthermore, together with the cyberprotests, how did such probable social movements reshape the contentious politics in present-day urban China?

During the Internet era from 1998 on, as Diani (2000) rightly claims, the ramifications of the capacity by which the Internet can alter the community are subject to the nature of the social movement organization (SMO). Only from the starting point of the politicisation of the whole range of NSOs, can we understand the morphological change from "e-social movements" to "asserting rights movements" in which the transformation of NSOs in the following years is a key.

6.2.1 1998-99: the starting point of politicization

Analogous to 1989, in the year between 1998 and 1999, I find a series of episodic events concerned with societal self-organization but challenging various restrictive institutional boundaries around social organizations, such as Falun Gong's sit-in protest, the organization of China Democracy Party and the subsequent crackdown. Though these episodic events did not and could not terminate the ten-year long depoliticization of SOs so soon, they did channel a new opportunity space and a path for new social organizations in the way of contentious politics and thus underline the nature of the 1990's depoliticization.

6.2.1.1 1998: "Beijing Spring"

Firstly, after the National People's Congress substantially amended the Criminal Law and later the 15th Party Congress reiterated the need to govern the country by law in 1997, the political environment in China in late 1998 appeared to be abruptly relax, marked by a series of political events in sequence:

- In March, the pro-liberalist reform "rightist" (右派分子 in 1950's "anti-rightist movement") Zhu Rongji assumed office;
- In June US president Bill Clinton was the first president to visit China since 1989; the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mary Robinson, followed in September;

- In that year, China became a formal member of WTO with a bundle of economic-political commitments to international society, and the Chinese government signed two covenants, namely "the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights" in 1997, and "the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights" in 1998.

Inspired by these dramatic signals, entering the fall of 1998, the political discourse revived again in China nation-wide, including various forms like public political saloons, political speeches and publications. These notable and exciting developments were thus labelled as a "Beijing Spring (*xiao yang chun*)" by the international media until the Party's agencies reacted in November 1998 – four famous liberalist intellectuals were forced to leave the Think Tanks they served.[167]

6.2.1.2 China Democracy Party and China Development Union

Secondly, in this air, a lot of democratic activists sought to organize political parties or party-like organizations in 1998. The Democracy Party of China (CDP) and the China Development Union (CDU) were among the most noteworthy organizations which emerged at that time. Both of them were suppressed at the end of 1998 and along with the above mentioned small groups, saw key members jailed and sentenced in the following year. Some were later exciled, like Xu Wenli, and some are still serving their prison time.

Significantly, they were mainly constituted or initiated by Democracy Wall's activists (1978-79) and democratic activists in 1989.[168] According to Wright's interviews and Human Rights Watch's report, the CDP had close links with the activists relating to the Democracy Wall's movement and

[167] They were Fan Gang (economist), Liu Junning (political scientist), Mao Yushi (economist), and Li Shenzhi (high-rank Party cadre). Cf. *Xiaocankao Daily News*, No.745, Apr.7, 2000, online document available at: http://www.bignews.org/20000407.txt .

[168] The two reports are so far the most detailed documents available about CDP. In Wright's (2002) Table 1, which shows amongst the mainland members of China Democracy Party (CDP), those who participated in Democracy Wall were 14.5%, and those in the 1989 movement were 25.3%. In addition, from Wright's Table 4, we could hardly find professional social workers.

Some of these "old generation of pro-democracy activists" have sought to establish NGOs around 1998, such as Xu Wenli's "China Human Rights Watch", Xin Yangan's "Corruption Watch" (Cf. Wright, 2002:908) but could not avoid from being jailed or finally exciled.

the 1989 movement and overseas pro-democracy organizations (see also Wright 2002:923).[169] The CDP (Hangzhou) sought to register as a formal political party in accordance with due procedure under the relaxed control that had flashed in the late 1998, and the local Civil Affairs Agency surprisingly accepted their application materials. But over thirty initiators and core members (e.g. Wang Youcai) were quickly detained, interrogated, and eventually sentenced in the name of "subversion" in the following half year (ibid).

Likely, though the Beijing-based CDU (registered in Hong Kong) claimed to "promote the green peace movement in China" and thus adopted the form of voluntary association – in its first National Congress held on 4-5 October 1998, "Forty-five delegates representing 3,058 CDU members passed [the] Constitution of [the] China Development Union ... and elected the first executive committee" – this organization was still formally prohibited in October 1998, when the officials the Ministry of Civil Affairs went to its office and declared that the organization was illegal (ibid).[170]

This is a rare case that MCA banned and raided into an NSO-like organization in such a harsh way in recent years. Though little information about this suppressive action has been revealed, it is convinced that CDU's large-scale nation-wide members, huge organizational structure and broad links with some civic associations and state machines,[171] have exceeded too many regarding the implicit boundaries Chinese conservative governmental agencies could have tolerated. That is also

[169] See *Human Rights Watch* report (2000), "China: Nipped In The Bud-The Chinese Government's Response to the CDP", online document, Vol. 12, No. 5, September 2000, available at: http://hrw.org/reports/2000/china/, http://www.hrw.org/reports/2000/china/china009-04.htm#P487_99868.

[170] HRW's report here wrongly said that MCA's employees performed banning action. In fact, according to the report of Hong Kong-based Information Centre of Human Rights and Democracy on August 27, 1998, it was over ten policemen that raided into the office of CDU. MCA's officials were involved in the dissoving of an CDU's sister organization on November 23, 1998—The Institute of Developmental New Strategy, which was also founded by Peng Ming and registered in Beijing.

[171] Under executive committee, CDU set up five standing secretaries and fully-designed performing apparatus, including supervising, communication, etc. Regarding CDU's social links, Peng confirmed CDU "absorbed a lot of members of PLA" (available at: http://www.future-china.org/spcl_rpt/1c2s/1c2s871027.htm); another report said some institutional members of CDU, such as Songshan Society of Literature of Inner-Mongolia, has over 1700 members, available at: http://www.democracy.org.hk/chinese/moon_new/98/dec/1_12_98.htm)

what the leading ENGO FON's feared since beginning to recruit members nation wide.[172] Perhaps due to the same concern, FON's former director Liang Congjie emphasized "Green but not Party" as FON's basic principle in many cases, which was also circulated in ENGO's circle.

6.2.1.3 Falun Gong

Thirdly, a Qigong association peaked and directly challenged China's authority through a sit-in petition on 25 April 1999, which was deemed as "a most serious political incident post-1989" by the Chinese government. Falun Gong (FLG), an officially recognized body-exercising popular organization, among one of those "breathing spaces" of "a continuum from officially sanctioned bureaucratic organizations to popular revitalistic movements headed by charismatic masters" (Chen, 1995: 354), was defined as an "evil cult" by Chinese government after 20 July 1999 and then heavily repressed, although FLG claimed itself neither a religion nor an organization with political intention. Given such deep gap, how or what drove FLG to move to the bottom-line of the authoritarian state and then become a global protesting movement after the harsh crackdown, may be a key in understanding the turning point of 1998 in the SOs and NSOs' development.

In my view, it is along the above mentioned three dimensions that FLG spanned the boundaries of SOs and then declared the end of the "depoliticization decade" of China's SOs. First of all, respectively based on fieldwork and historical research, Chan (2004) and Palmer (2005) recently conclude that FLG may be properly viewed as a movement, a "moral movement" (Chan, 2004) or a "social and cultural movement" fulfilling a "belief and moral vacancy" in China's society. Chan and Palmer's insights here suggest a continuum of FLG's politicized transition, that is, FLG's "identity struggle over meaning" from a moral movement to a global protest movement (Zhao, 2004). Hence FLG "typifies a paradigm of interpenetration with the state" (Palmer, 2005).

That is to say, with respect in such politicized transition, FLG is a rare case in which people noticed its profoundly multi-dimensional characteristics through FLG's "polarization" (Palmer,

[172] Supra note 32. It was verified by Zhang Jilian, the office director of FON.

2005): social movement, cyber network, and network structure, as though it was a perfect case to verify the proposed three-level framing of NSOs' evolution.

At the first level, FLG's campaigns as previously noticed by many scholars can be understood as the reaction of the repressed, as a "self protection" of habitualized exercise. I observed that the belief "truthfulness-benevolence-forbearance (zhen-shan-ren)" remained central during FLG's shift from early "moral movement" to the later "global protestant movement", which was codified in the habitualized exercise of FLG's exercisers. Both the exercise and slogan were used in street protests. From this point, the governmental crackdown, marked by China's president Jiang Zemin launched a general crackdown on 20 July 1999, played as the triggering factor again to transform FLG members' identity into the political identity in Tilly's (2003) terms.

At the second level, FLG demonstrated a surprising cybernetwork and complicated structure as Tong (2002) documented. When FLG developed to a peak between late 1998 and early 1999, the "Chinese authorities estimated that China has at least 2 to 3 million FLG practitioners but the number could possibly be up to 40 million" (Chan, 2004:674). More importantly, so many FLG followers and practitioners were connected by "39 main stations, 1,900 guidance stations, and 28,263 practice sites nation-wide" and structured as a large-scale "neat hierarchy" under Beijing-based "*Falun Dafa* Research Society" – the only registered associational entity as a "direct-affiliate branch" of "China *Qigong* Scientific Research Society" from 1992 to 1996 (Tong, 2002: 640, 642, 646). Significantly, FLG's network penetrated into "state organs, military people, armed police, medical practitioners, teachers and even diplomats were also found in FLG". It was estimated that 15.6 per cent of 2.3 million FLG followers were Party's members (Chan, 2004: 681-2).

The third level occurred in the use of the Internet in FLG's internal communication and social mobilization. Most of FLG-related research literatures have noticed such development,[173] and are inclined to conclude that FLG's "movement could not have existed in the same form before their

[173] Besides special FLG-related studies conducted by Chan (2004), Penny (2003), Tong (2002), etc, it was also specifically noted by Nan Lin (2001b:222-25) and Manuel Castells([1996] 2000: 7).

development" without ICT support after 1998-1999 (Penny, 2003:661). They reported FLG used the Internet to circulate news and organize activities especially from 1996 to 1999, combating the authorities. Besides http://www.minghui.org, the homepage of FLG functioning as an official internet platform for FLG followers to broadcast news and "scriptures" (*jing wen*) of Master Li Hongzhi, FLG also established the costly broadcasting of radio ("Voice of Hope") and satellite television (New Tanger TV).[174] In addition, FLG even sponsored some new Internet technology like the "UltraScape" (*wu jie*) browser developed by UltraReach Internet Corporation to help Chinese internet users break through the internet firewall utilized by Chinese government.[175]

In short, FLG seemed to have utilized all the mobilizing tools available, including ICTs, conventional media (television, radio broadcasting and print media), street protest and legal litigation; and launched a series of campaigns with various mobilizing targets, like the "witnessing tortured victims of FLG" campaign for arousing the international society, the "withdrawing from the Party" action and "Nine Commentaries on CCP" action for the sake of gaining support from ordinary Chinese, both inland and overseas. Thus, despite the impossibility of verifying whether there existed a full-time deployed leadership of the movement, the well-organized media campaigns in association with world-wide street protests have constituted a global protest movement that directly challenges the legitimacy of the authoritarianism Party-state.

To sum up, the actions and events of CDP, CDU and FLG constitute an "episodic transformation crossing the time-space boundary" in Giddens' terms. Nevertheless, they are

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[174] Li Hongzhi, the founder of FLG who currently resides in New York since 1996. See also Benjamin Penny's "The Life and Times of Li Hongzhi: *Falun Gong* and Religious Biography", in *The China Quarterly*, pp.643-61, 2003.

[175] In conjunction with UltraScape, "Triangle Boy" is among one of the earliest browsers developed by some American Chinese to deal with China's official firewall—an alternative but real boundary set by China's government. Analogous to the relation between UltraScape, there reported even CIA interested in such technology, a threat for internet filtering. See *The Wall Street Journal*, Feb.12, 2001, "Small Start-Up Helps the CIA To Mask Its Moves on the Web", reported by Neil King JR., a staff reporter of WSJ.

A recent report, "Internet Filtering in China in 2004-2005", released by the OpenNet Initiative (ONI) at the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission's public hearing on China's State Control Mechanisms and Methods, on April 14, 2005, documents in what degree and how Chinese government controls and manipulates websites, blogs, email, and online discussion forums. An online document, available at: http://www.opennetinitiative.net/studies/china/ONI_China_Country_Study.pdf.

different in the politicization processes along different boundaries which were confirmed by their interpenetration:

- The failure of the CDP and CDU confirms the impossibility of organizing a political party;
- The case of FLG illustrates a process in Tilly's (2003) sense how identity becomes political identity when the government intervenes in societal self-organization.

These boundaries thus frame an opportunity structure allowing moderate NSOs and movements via twofold bottom lines and threefold effective modalities for NSO's development. The bottom lines refer to the organization of political parties and street marches that directly challenge the authoritarian governance. These two forms of radical contention rang true with pro-democracy movements and organizations in the decade of 1980s, penetrating and maximizing the edge that the authoritarian regime could tolerate without reaction from them. They are therefore analogous to the political taboo of the "Four Principles", which was challenged by the "Democracy Wall" movement spanning 1978/79 and then caused a repression i.e. a "movement of anti-movement" entilted "anti-bourgeois liberalization movement" in subsequent two years.

However, there are three modalities highlighted during these campaigns: the media, decentralized networks and movement. They are corresponding to the threefold structuration of communication, networking, and politicisation in turn. It is these modalities that undertake the mobilization, identification and organizational maintenance throughout FLG's campaigns and then suggest a distinct opportunity structure that differentiates it from CDP and CDU.

6.2.2 2003: the rise of "asserting rights movement"

By 2003, the politicized moves of social change reached a new watershed. The year of 2003 was labelled as "New Civil Rights Movement Year" by the Chinese media.[176] The death of Sun Zhigang and the SARS crisis almost took place simultaneously in the first half of 2003. According to many

[176] See *Chinese Newsweek* (Beijing), No. 161, December 22, 2003.

interviews, the two events essentially changed the environment of NSOs and then paved a way to civil rights movement. It is just what ENGOs lack in last ten years, especially during the SARS crisis, although some Chinese scholars began to recognize the emerging "urban movements" since 2000, i.e. increasing street protests of laid-off workers of SOEs, farmer workers who were unfairly treated, and victims of governmental policy of "forceful demolition and relocation" in urbanization, as a result of continuous "Public Grievances" sustained in the whole 1990s (Liu, 2003).

In fact, marked with Sun Zhigang's death and the following campaigns against "Administrative Measures on the Arresting and Eviction of Urban Vagrants and Beggars" (the State Council of China, 1982), which was repealed and replaced by "Administrative Measures on the Helping and Administration of Poor Urban Vagrants and Beggars" (the State Council of China, 2003) on June 20, China's NSOs especially those informal NSOs and liberal intellectual groups found a new category that seemed able to accommodate NSOs in a new contentious politics.[177] That is the claim-making of an overall citizenship.

Since then, NSOs as a new social force, seemed to be a new social movement or precisely "asserting rights movement", and began to politicize all NSOs and then the urban politics of present-day China, provided that such an organization was involved in the networks of NSOs or the new category politics of NSOs.

[177] The "Country Reports on Human Rights Practices – 2004", released by a governmental agency of United States(the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labour) on February 28, 2005, documented Sun Zhigang's event. It said,

"March 2003 death of university graduate Sun Zhigang in a custody-and-repatriation camp designed to hold illegal migrants focused public attention on abuses in the administrative detention system. Under the custody-and-repatriation system, police detained and forcibly repatriated to their home provinces migrants, petitioners, and political activists caught without an identification card, work permit, or temporary residence permit. Public outcry following Sun's death played an important role in the State Council's decision, in June 2003, to revoke the custody-and-repatriation system and convert custody-and-repatriation camps across the country into voluntary humanitarian aid shelters for the homeless. Initial reports indicated that most current residents of the camps are indeed there voluntarily. In June, a facility employee who urged inmates to beat Sun was sentenced to death. During the year, one inmate was given a suspended death sentence, and 17 others received prison sentences in connection with Sun's death." An online document, available at: http://www.usembassy-china.org.cn/shanghai/pas/hyper/2005/chinaHR05.htm.

6.2.2.1 Anti-judicial injustice movement

In the case of Sun Zhigang event, there were two key factors: the media and intellectuals. Their continuous collective actions after Sun Zhigang ultimately constituted an anti-judicial injustice movement. Nanfang Metropolis Daily, for instance, as the first paper revealing the news of the tortured death of Sun Zhigang and truth of SARS in China, launched this movement but at a price. The chief editor (Cheng Yizhong) and general manager (Yu Huafeng) were arrested and accused of a doubtful "economic problem" in 2004. A petition relay action soon formed, directly leading to Cheng being released in August 2004. On June 8, 2005, this movement reached a climax which saw 2,356 journalists and media workers who were mainly of Nanfang Daily Group co-signed a petition letter to the Higher Court of Guangdong Province advocating the judicial justice for Yu, who was convicted 8 years earlier. It is the largest pro-democracy petition which has occurred within the Party's hierarchy system since 1989.[178]

For Chinese liberal intellectuals, the event of Sun Zhigang was an opportunity for them to start organizing themselves and mobilizing the society. For example, the liberal intellectuals in Guangzhou, some of whom had been deeply involved in the Sun Zhigang's event and the SARS crisis, organized GDHA in late 2003 with the strong intention and clearly defined claims of citizenship and social justice.[179]

In particular, three jurist doctors (Xu Zhiyong, Teng Biao, and Yu Jiang) whose joint petition letter to NPC played a key role in pressing the State Council to revoke that "bad law" before NPC might start probable legislation procedure, founded the "Open Constitution Initiative" (OCI) on October 28, 2003, aiming to provide legal aid to the wrongly-convicted victims and conduct research projects relating to constitutional rights – the "appeal system" (上访制度) and the People's Representative system.

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[178] Cf. the "Attacks on the Press in 2005: Journalists in Prison", published by the Committee to Protect Journalist (CPJ), on December 1, 2005, available at: http://www.cpj.org/attacks05/pages05/imprison_05.html#china.

[179] Supra note 45.

By August 2005, the OCI concentrated on four wrongly-convicted victims (e.g. Chen Guoqing, namely Chengde Case), who were convicted five times in the last ten years of robbing and killing a taxi driver in 1994. In this case, I find, Dr. Xu and OCI's mobilizing skill appeared to be more complicated and politicized than that of Sun Zhigang's case. They held a press conference for four defendants' families in March 2004, organized a public criminological workshop in March 2005, launched open letters to NPC, supreme court, and the Ministry of Public Security in 2004 and 2005, and submitted an application to local administrations for organizing marches against judicial injustice on May 30, 2005 and July 4, 2005.

Likewise, Li Jian (the founder of Dalian-based "Citizen's Asserting Rights Web", http://www.gmwq.org/) and Ai Xiaoming (a liberal intellectual in Guangzhou city), initiated a joint letter action calling for an independent autopsy and investigation for the death of Huang Jin (in Hunan province) in 2003. By October 3, 2003 it raised over 1800 additional signatories on the Internet. After that, Li's Citizen Asserting Rights Web was shut down by a local Informational Agency in November of 2003.[180]

Nevertheless, many "false cases", with a focus on the victims of police violence and judicial injustice (both substantial and procedural) and even "wrong performance" of death, were disclosed by the media, Internet, and those new public (liberal) intellectuals within a short time after 2003, such as Nie Shubin's (in Hebei province) wrongly-awarded death penalty in 1994 and She Xianglin's (in Hubei province) wrongly convicted penalty of 11 years, etc.

Though the above cases seem to be highly diffused and the internal structure of this movement remains unclear too, there are still two public campaigns that can be deemed as a tangible part of this anti-judicial injustice movement. The first, at a grassroots level as Xu Zhiyong and OCI reported, a large-scale campaign of "collective appeal" formed in recent years. Almost every morning thousands of nationwide "appealing people" gathered at various Appeal Agencies of

[180] See "The Report about the Death of Huang Jing" by Yang Yinbo, an online document, available at: http://www.epochtimes.com/gb/4/1/5/n442783.htm .

the organs of central government, Supreme Court, Supreme Prosecution and Ministry of Public Security, waiting to submit "appeals" for their cases and exchanging information each other.[181]

Another paralleling campaign of the "judicial independence movement" was the Internet discourse that was initiated by Wang Yi and Prof. He Weifang and associates in 2003. Following the P model, this discourse highlighted the claims to weaken the Party's control of the judicial system, for instance, the proposed withdrawl of the Party's Political-Legal Committee.

6.2.2.2 Tian'anmen Mothers' Movement

Growing spontaneously from inter-connections among the victims and their families in the 1990s, Ding Zilin organized 111 mothers of victims in the "June 4th" Massacre into a campaign called the "Tian'anmen mothers' movement" and initiated a joint letter in June 2001 calling for the CCP to redress the victims and offer state compensation. By 2006, in addition to launching a joint letter every year, this movement has evolved to a networked organization in distributing the international donations to victims' families, coordinating annual street protests in Hong Kong and democratic organizations in Hong Kong and pro-democracy activists in mainland China.[182]

6.2.2.3 Labour Rights Movement for Migrant-workers

The labour rights movement in China gradually formed since the late 1990s, comprising of three separate parts:

- the spontaneously-organized grassroots trade unions of migrant workers (i.e. "peasant workers" or "migrant workers" in Chinese cities);

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[181] See Xu Zhiyong's report of "applealing people" in Beijing, a study conducted by Xu and his colleagues.

Cf. an online document, "Xinzheng Shiye zhong de Xinfang Zhili" (The Governance of Appeals in Perspective Constitutional Politics), available at http://www.usc.cuhk.edu.hk/wk_wzdetails.asp?id=4317.

[182] See details in the website of Tian'anmen Mother Movement, supported by Human Rights in China, available at: http://big5.hrichina.org/big5/article_listings.adp?category_id=61.

In 2002, this "movement" was nominated as a candidate unit for the Nobel Prize for peace.

- the resistance campaigns launched by workers (or laid-off workers) of state-owned enterprises (SOEs) or foreign-capital enterprises (FCEs);
- and the rise of labour rights NSOs, as previously discussed in Chapter 3.

Under conditions of lacking the freedom to organize trade unions, the grassroots unions of migrant workers emerged in the form of "worker associations" (*wu gong xie hui, wai lai gong xie hui*). Most of them were ironically recognized by the official trade union and INGOs simultaneously. For instance, the Xinhua News Agency reported "Beijing began creating community trade unions in 2000. By late 2002, its Dongcheng district has established such unions in all its 109 communities and increasing numbers of migrant workers want to join."[183] Meanwhile, according to labour activist Yang Yinbo and Hong Kong-based labour NGO – China Labour Watch, from 2003 to the first half of 2004 there emerged at least several hundred "peasant workers" unions in a number of provinces, especially in Heilongjiang (over 100) and Qinghai (24).[184]

For the SOEs or FCEs' workers (and laid-off workers), these "old working class" also claimed the civil rights during the nation-wide resistances campaigns. On this point, the mainstream of this labour rights movement differentiates from classic labour movements, but close to other asserting rights movements in present day China.

It is to be stressed, though that the labour rights NSOs concentrated on improving labour conditions in working places and securing compensation for work-related injury, they seemed to have no intention to build or have built visible connections with the grassroots "migrant worker associations". Also, in the nation-wide resistance campaigns organized by those SOEs or FCEs' workers and laid-off workers, one can not find any evidence of directly bridging between the "old working class" and the "new working class" (migrant workers).

[183] See Xinhua News Agency October 8, 2003.

[184] See Yang, Yinbo, 2004: A Report on NGOs and Other Forms of Non-governmental Powers of Peasant Workers in Mainland China, in *China Labour Study*, No.1, Autumn, 2004, pp.28-31, an electronic journal of Hong Kong-based labour rights NGO China Labour Watch.

6.2.2.4 House-owners' Asserting Rights Movement

An autonomic house-owners association of Jingzhou Building in Shenzhen city organized by Zou Jiajian, successfully terminated contractual relation with the property management company after struggle which was designated by the real estate developer. Since then, the official principle "whoever develops is whoever manages" was inverted. A house-owners' asserting rights urban movement was formed and spread over many Chinese cities.[185] Pan (2005) recorded a recent campaign in Shanghai.

Among the collective actions in mobilizing and protesting, I find that almost all resources/approaches available in present-day urban China were being fully utilized. In the case of house-owners' association of Huilongguan, according to Nie, they pursued property-rights-based community rights and asserted in concrete collective actions:

(1) organized house owners congress and autonomy association;
(2) built a message group through mobile phones and Internet e-forum(BBS);
(3) organized street actions, such as householders congress, sit-in petitions and car demonstrations;
(4) resorted to legal claims (collective litigation);
(5) and even participated in the local elections of People's Representatives (local legislators).

For instance, Nie, aged 35, an engineer and businessman, who won the election campaign supported by his house-owners' association in December of 2003, became the first self-nominated People Representative since the self-nominating election movement in early 1980's.[186]

In this case, Nie and his association utilized almost all legal/non-violent means available in present urban China in asserting their "rights and interests" (权益). Still, there are three noteworthy

[185] In interview with Prof. Cai Dingjian on March 1, 2006 in Beijing, a leading scholar in China's constitutional politics who advocated asserting rights movements since early 21st century, Cai too insisted house-owners' movement to be a crucial part of current asserting rights movements.

[186] Cf. interview with Nie Hailiang, on May 9, 2004. See also *China Newsweek*(xin wen zhou kan), Dec.22, 2003, p.38, Special Issue: New Civil Rights Movements in 2003.

points concerning their expressive actions. The first, is that such a movement with assertion of private property rights and neighbourhood-based community interests, seems not only a campaign against the real estate developers, but also challenges the coalition of governmental agencies and those developers. In this context, among specific legal claims, both administrative litigations against governmental agencies and civil litigations against developers are often resorted to by those owners' associations as the final solution.[187]

The second, in most instances, their collective actions of demonstration were under the tight surveillance of police, highlighting the politicized nature of this kind of movement. Mr. Nie verified that, in February 2004, the policemen appeared to be mostly concerned with the possible negative impacts on "social stability" resulting from their actions who cross-interrogated him and four other organizers of Huilongguan house-owners' association.

The third, from the first case of Jingzhou Building in Shenzhen city in 2001 to one of the latest cases like Huilongguan community in Beijing, these owners associations resorted to jurists or professional legal aid organizations, due to highly disputed values, which meant a large amount of litigation fees and a high-level barriage deterring them from the legal solution.[188] The connections between house owners associations and intellectuals and professional asserting rights NSOs were thus built in this movement, in particular, the Beijing-based OCI. Among which, some lawyers significantly turned to this field and then became professional "asserting rights lawyers" in favour of house-owners, like Mr. Qin Bing mentioned earlierly.

In short, in company with the rapid urbanization in present China, the house-owners' movement is underpinned by four elements: the neighbourhood-based communities, the assertion of property rights and neighbourhood-based collective interests, the Internet, and a number of professional asserting rights organizations and lawyers. Hence this represented a note worthy

[187] For example, Furunjiayuan owner association sued Beijing Urban Planning Bureau in May 2004.

[188] Supra note 36. In the case of Zou and Jinzhou Building's, J.Dr. Sun Hailong of Beijing University offered legal aid for him and Jinzhou owners association during litigation. For Nie and Huilongguan owners association, J.Dr. Xu Zhiyong and his OCI provided support.

development of the emerging urban movements if using the benchmark of Castells' definition of urban movements – referring to processes of purposive social mobilization, organized in a given territory, oriented toward urban-related goals (Castells, [1997] 2004: 64).

6.2.2.5 Environmental Protection Movement

Though ENGOs were among the earliest NSOs in China that arose in 1990s and concentrated on the environmental education, there was not an measurable environment (ecological) movement until 2003, when China's government announced plans to build a cascade of 13 dams on Salween River (Nu Jiang). A "specialist workshop" on the development and environmental protection of Salween River, which was organized by the National Environment Agency on September 3, 2003, marked the starting point of the Salween campaign against the mega Dam construction project, according to Wang Yongcheng, the director of the Beijing-based Green Earth (Lv Jia Yuan) and also the only ENGO representative present at that meeting.[189]

In the following half year, Green Earth and Kunming-based Meigong Information Centre (also named Yunnan Da Zhong Liu Yu) mobilized almost all available techniques against the mega Dam project which was supported by Yunnan provincial government and the Ministry of Water and Electricity Recourse, including launching a joint-letter of sixty-two well-known persons in October 2003, introducing Salween into the agenda of the 3rd Round of the Sino-US Environmental Forum in November of 2003, participating in the international movement against mega hydro-Dam project at Salween River at the Second International Meeting of Dam-Affected People and their Allies Rasi Salai (Thailand) from November 28 to December 3, 2003, voicing together with FON and Global Village at 5th UN Civil Society Forum in March of 2004, lobbying UNESCO Beijing Office and organizing a press travel group to the Salween River in February of

[189] Supra note 64.

2004 (ibid). These actions eventually raised the top-down intervention from China's Premier Wen Jiabao, who temporally suspended the Dam project in April 2004.[190]

Nevertheless, whilst the ENGOs have shown remarkable corporatist cooperation with governmental agency in early stage, as I observed, the involvement of environment movements actually made such relationship more or less subtle. The foregoing plausible "negotiating relation" appeared to be more and more contentious to some extent, especially at the grassroots level.[191] For instance, the launcher of a grassroots Hangzhou-based ENGO "Green Watch" was arrested on October 19, 2005, due to Green Watch's involvement in the "large-scale" protests against environmental pollution in Huashui village in Zhejiang province that year.[192] In this case, another launcher (Lai Jinbiao) is found amongst the pro-democracy activists—a member of CDP in Hangzhou city.

6.2.3 The Category Politics of NSMs

In subsequent years, the contentious politics of NSOs has two distinguishing development. Corresponding to the two constitutive aspects of category as mentioned in the preceding chapter—the social boundaries and symbolic boundaries—such a new category of "asserting rights" created a new domain of the "asserting rights movements" that assembled a series of episodic events in urban China.

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[190] See *New York Times*, Thursday, April 8, 2004, "Beijing suspends plan for large dam" by Jim Yardley.

[191] On the one hand, for example, the second influential joint letter launched on January 21, 2005, with 56 signatories from China's ENGO, was just named "In support of National Environmental Protection Bureau". At almost the same time, Pan Yue, the vice director of National Environmental Protection Bureau, pushed an administrative "environmental storm" since 2004.

On the other hand, we recorded a number of grassroots NSOs which emerged as the counterpart of GONGO's large-scale projects (e.g. CYDF's Project Hope and China Help Poverty Foundation's project of assisting poor student in Shaanxi province since 1996), such as e-forum-based NSOs like Light of Hope, "One-Kilo Project", "Lighthouse", "Shan'nabian", and "Newsky Donate Plan".

See following www address in turn: http://www.lohcn.org/, http://www.1kg.cn/, http://www.lighthouse.org.cn/, http://www.shannabian.net/, http://ns.3824.org/.

[192] See the news reported by *Human Rights in China* (HRIC), available at: http://www.hrichina.org/public/contents/press?revision%5fid=26085&item%5fid=26084; and http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/world/archives/2005/10/27/2003277576 .

On the one hand, some NSOs began to become involved in "rightful resistance protests" in both urban and rural areas as the following influential cases illustrated. From these actions, the nation-wide dispersed resistance protests became integrated into the whole asserting rights movements.

(1) The Beijing-based "Empowerment and Rights Institute" (*Ren Zhi Quan*, founded by Ms. Hou Wenzuo in 2003) and Yannan e-forum were deeply involved in the "Taishi village" event in 2005;[193]

(2) The Hangzhou-based Green Watch was involved in the Huashui village event in which local residents of Huashui village in Zhejiang province launched continued large-scale protests against the local government after they failed in claiming pollution compensation from a chemical factory;[194]

(3) In company with the investigations about the "appealing people" (*shangfang qunzhong*) in Beijing and Henan province which were carried out by Beijing-based OCI, the Guantian Beijing saloon organized donations and the distributions of winter clothes in October 2005 for these "appealing people" in Beijing.[195]

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[193] The protest occurring at a small village in riched Guangdong province Taishi Village was raised by a self-organized collective protest of local residents against the corruption of local Party cadres since July 2005, but became a lasting campaign reported by interntional media after above NSOs and asserting rights activists became involved in it. In the next year, whilst the protest was tightly controlled by the local authority, Yannan e-forum was forcefully closed by informational agency in Beijing in September 2005; about ten plainclothes policemen raided the office of Empowerment and Rights Institute on August 29, 2005, when the UN High Commissioner of Human Rights Ms. Louise Arbour visited Beijing; and the authorities in the southern Chinese city of Guangzhou detained prominent civil rights lawyer Guo Feixiong on suspicion of "running an illegal business" in the mid-September of 2006.

Cf. Ai Xiaoming (an asserting rights activist)'s essay "Taishi Village, My Neighbor", available at: http://www.zonaeuropa.com/20051005_2.htm ; and Yanan eforum's fate, available at: http://chinadigitaltimes.net/2005/10/taishi_village_my_neighbor_ai_xiaoming.php ; "China Detains Top Guangdong Rights Lawyer", by RFA, on Sep.15, 2006, available at: http://www.rfa.org/english/news/2006/09/15/china_guofeixiong/ ; and *NewYork Times*, August 30, 2005, "Beijing Police Raid Rights Group Office", by Joseph Kahn.

See also "Truth of the Taishi village incident", an official report of the early development by China Daily on Oct.18, 2005, available at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/english/doc/2005-10/18/content_485953.htm ; "Taishi Village's Struggle for Democracy in China", by Siwang, Epoch Times, available at http://www.theepochtimes.com/news/5-10-2/32852.html; and Hu Ping's (2005) "Taishi Village: Asign of times", available at: http://hrichina.org/fs/view/downloadables/pdf/crf/CRF-2005-4_Taishi.pdf .

[194] Supra note 192.

[195] Supra note 181. See also an initial post by *Wu Yue Shan Ren*, who initiated this donation action and was among the organizers of Guantian Beijing Saloon, available at: http://www14.tianya.cn/publicforum/Content/no01/1/190287.shtml .

On the other hand, in 2006, the asserting rights movements turn to a self-protection movement against an "anti-movement". As the two latest events/actions surfaced by criminally charging the top human rights lawyer Gao Zhisheng and "barefoot" blind law worker Chen Guangcheng respectively show, to defend professional asserting-rights activists locates the centre of the agenda setting of asserting rights movements in 2006.

(4) The detention of Gao Zhisheng on August 15, 2006, the top "asserting rights" lawyer having co-launched or participated in a number of influential joint-letter actions, raised at least four on-going joint-letter actions by October 2006.[196] These joint-letters, having involved most of the local "asserting rights activists" and overseas Chinese pro-democracy organizations, concentrated on three issues in turn: the lasting-one-year abusive police violence imposed on Gao and his family, opposing the charge of "incitement to subvert the state's authority" on September 21, 2006, and the proposal calling for boycotting the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing.[197]

(5) Likewise, the persecution over Chen Guangcheng, a "barefoot" blind law worker who began to advocate rights for victims in the case of forceful abortion in Linyi city (Shandong province) since April 2005, also raised a pro-Chen's campaign. This campaign continued for almost one year from mid-August 2005, Linyi city and Yinan county authorities used surveillance, threats, restrictions on personal freedom and other illegal methods to suppress Chen Guangcheng and other rights advocates.[198] Among which, there are three worthwhile actions to be noted as the evidence of the

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[196] Gao has represented defendants many times in sensitive cases involving alleged violations of human rights, such as torture of Falun Gong exercisers, Christian house church leaders and asserting rights activsts during the last few years. Cf. the profile of Gao zhisheng, edited by "Chinese Human Rights Defenders", available at: http://crd-net.org/Article_Print.asp?ArticleID=2644 .

[197] See joint-letters on by Qian-ming.net, available at: http://www.qian-ming.net/gb/default.aspx?dir=scp&cid=94 ; http://www.qian-ming.net/gb/viewarticle_gb.aspx?vID=2676 .

[198] Linyi city and Yinan county authorities also used the same means to block outside rights advocators from approaching local courts and witness after Chen was house-arrested in January and jailed in March 2006.

See "Blind lawyer: A legal crusader in China", by Alexa Olesen (BEIJING, Associated Press) on July 20, 2006, http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2006/07/20/ap/world/mainD8IVSIC07.shtml ; "Chinese Activist's Verdict Overturned", by Maureen Fan Washington Post Foreign Service, November 2, 2006, available at: http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/11/01/AR2006110102504.html

On 29 August 2006, more than 100 leaders in the fields of human rights, bioethics, reproductive health and religion from more than 30 countries and six continents submitted a letter to Chinese President Hu Jintao to protest the treatment and trial of Chen Guangcheng., http://www.catholicsforchoice.org/news/pr/2006/20060829_callforchenguangchengrelease.asp

self-protection move of NSOs in addition to far more world-wide media attentions and INGO's supports:

1) Brooks' Liang Xiaoya (the co-launcher of FON, currently director of Beijing-based NGO "Brooks") visited Chen from Oct. 24, 2005;[199]
2) Beijing-based OCI's Dr. Xu Zhiyong and two lawyers Li Fangping and Li Shubin visited Chen on Oct. 4, 2005, and then undertook the role of defense lawyers for Chen in the subsequent trial;[200]
3) On the day of the first trail on August 18, 2006, in association with OCI's Dr. Teng Biao, over 10 rights advocators in Beijing including young liberal intellectuals and ordinary Internet activists organized an audience group to express their support.

In the above broadly-reported actions by Chinese Internet and international media, all NSO activists have been harmed by abusive policing and police violence to varying degrees, which occurred when they sought to enter the territory where local resistance actions occurred or just nearby the residence of NSO activists.[201] Nevertheless, this differed from the earlier overall crackdown over FLG carried out by the whole policing system – these repressive actions were confined to a few of high-profile activists. Such repressive "anti-movement" seemed unable to hinder those platformalized or loosely-organized NSOs organizing self-protection campaigns continuously. By contrast, the category of "asserting rights movements" appears to be an emerging new social norm capable of reshaping the "anti-movement".

[199] Cf. "我见到了陈光诚", by Liang Xiaoyan, in *Dafeng*, No.8, December 10,2005. *Dafeng* is a googlegroup-based electronic magazine circulated within China's asserting rights activists.

[200] Cf. "山东警方强将北京学者律师送京", by Lin Sen (VOA), on October 5, 2005, available at: http://www.voanews.com/chinese/archive/2005-10/w2005-10-05-voa40.cfm;

See also "Prominent China Christian Human Rights Defenders Visit US", by China Aid Association, on Nov.21,2006, in Christian News Wire, available at: http://www.christiannewswire.com/news/273921554.html .

[201] Supra note 193.

For instance, in the case of the third collective action organized by new liberal intellectuals, when they were profoundly stopped just outside the local court hall by bodily violence imposed upon them by the local policemen, where the local policemen were wearing plain clothes and pretending to be gang members.[202]

At this moment, the above actions suggests the circle of asserting rights movements are converging to a point similar to that before the FLG's movement and e-social movements ever occurred – the categorical boundaries of asserting movements have become a contest arena of NSOs and asserting rights movements. In Gamson and Meyer's terms of the framing of political opportunity which refers to the contest between institutional and extra-institutional actions, such categorical arenas where increasing NSOs are engaging thus suggest twofold structure of political opportunity: (Gamson and Meyer, 1996: 285)

1) On the level of the social boundary, via the linking of dispersed nation-wide "rightful resistance" and organized "asserting rights movements", these new attempts have penetrated the social boundaries between urban and rural China. Along which, the local governments has tended to block any "outside" rights advocates or "extra-institutional" actions permeating into the authoritarian institutions, the rigid social boundaries that social control depended on.

2) On level of symbolic boundaries, the on-going self-protection campaigns have successfully shaped the focus activists as the symbols of asserting rights movements. The opportunity structure of movements reflected in those symbolic carriers from Sun Zhigang in the beginning and then to the Tian'anmen Mothers to the Salween River to Chen Guangcheng and Gao Zhisheng, thus demonstrates an evolutionary path of social cognition or norms enforced by rights movements during the past few years from basic citizenship to environmental rights to

[202] According to the online communication with Li Zhaohui in November 2006. Li, among the leading young liberal intellectuals in Beijing, is a participant of this action. Regarding the detaintion of Xu and Li, see the statement by Hu Jia, available at: http://www.peacehall.com/news/gb/china/2006/08/200608180048.shtml .

leading eventually to political rights, as though a self-fulfilling prophecy of opportunity space interpreted by movement activists during the formation of rational oppositional consciousness.

6.3 NSOs as Social Movement Organizations: a discussion

In light of Tilly's (2004a) social movements, the above twofold category politics correspond to two boundary mechanisms respectively: (1) those that precipitate boundary change and (2) those that constitute boundary change. Properly speaking, the symbolic featured activists and episodic events precipitate the boundary change. The constitutive mechanisms of boundary change point to the specific structural functions of NSOs – how NSOs interpenetrate the boundaries.

In the foregoing e-social movements, the cyber-activism (i.e. the habitualization of online protest) and offline communicative actions have interpenetrated the boundaries between cyberspace and real society and reconstructed collective memory about the pro-democracy movement in 1989. In the asserting rights movements, I propose a structural-individualist activism of NSO-associated asserting rights movements as the extension of individual cyberactivism in practical society: the networking agitation. It characterizes threefold asserting rights actions in perspective of three-level structuration in the following ways:

- The interpretation of new norms of rights;
- specific communicative actions of agitation; and
- network growth.

To interpret new norms of rights by movement activists in Gamson and Meyer's view relates to the political opportunity and associated actions to change opportunity, thus makes the opportunity frame a self-fulfilling prophecy. (Gamson and Meyer, 1996: 287) Specifically, the above twofold category politics of the latest moves of NSOs suggest the symbolic/cognitive and social boundaries of rights per se as a political opportunity rather than the constraints for both NSOs and whole asserting rights movements against authoritarian regime – i.e. the dynamic politicisation of NSOs to

be addressed in the remainder of this chapter. On the other hand, the agitating actions of NSO (movement) activists and associated network growth will be left to Chapter 7.

6.3.1 Framing the Politicization of NSOs: NSOs as SMOs

6.3.1.1 Marshall's Threefold Categorizing of Citizenship: a brief overview

Since T.H. Marshall formulated how political rights and social rights generated from citizen rights and then the spheres of the individuals, society and the state were differentiated in both history and real life, the boundary of citizenship has expanded crossing merely individualism-based citizen rights, or Tonnies' concept of society on the basis of automatic individuals.

Firstly, citizenship "was rooted in the market place and the protection of private property rights, but it began to create rights not only through but also against the state" (Foweraker and Landman, 1997:7). Also, according to Foweraker and Landman's empirical examination, citizenship needs enforcement by state's power; it is an outcome "depended on the balance of political force in civil society, and the degree of separation between that society and the state" (ibid: 5).

Secondly, in the perspective of political practice, besides Hegelian autonomous institutions, like Dahl (1971) advocated, citizenship has been empowered with additional senses relating to political participation and public contestation.

Thirdly, citizenship may be viewed as a bundle of rights, implying an expansion order from citizen rights confirmed in early 19th century, to political rights universally realized in early 20th century, to social rights developed in the second half of 20th century, as T.H. Marshall's ([1949] 1964) seminal paper remarkably revealed.

On the other hand, as T.H. Marshall demonstrated, thanks to the development of social movements, the boundary of citizenship has experienced a universalising process from privileges of certain social groups to the universal rights of the whole society. Following Luhmann, Loet Leydesdorff (1997) notably argues in so-called "post-institutional" perspective that the society is an

emerging system with dynamically changing boundaries, where social movements not only reflect social boundaries, but also, "the rights achieved by movements stabilize the boundaries between lifeworld, state, and economy..." (see also Cohen and Arato, 1992: 562). The interpenetrating of contest boundaries of specific rights as the main form of category politics thus frames the political opportunity of social movements and social movement organizations.

6.3.1.2 The Paradoxical State of Citizenship in Urban China

Within China's authoritarian regime, citizenship has been subject to the Party/state's regulative institutions of social control over individuals and social-political life for the last half century. In Marshall's terms, this can be characterized as follows:

(1) Though the Constitution of P.R. China empowered a broad range of citizen rights, the institutionalized rights still remain very narrow as what the "General Principle of Civil Law" (1984) and civil law judicial system can guarantee. Within these institutions, the core of civil rights, i.e. the private property rights, had not been endorsed by the Constitution until 2004. Though a special legislation panel of the NPC has promoted the drafting of property law for over ten years, the latest draft of property law even failed in submitting it to NPC's formal discussion in the spring of 2006.

In the real life of urban China, as the core of citizenship, private property rights are also limited and often violated by the government, thus the full protection of private property rights depends on "continual informal networking".[203] In the field of the protection of personal rights, one can observe similar phenomena. It wasn't until 2003 that the almost unlimited police violence began to be constrained by the abolition of the "custody-and-repatriation" regulation. Analogous to the situation in Iran, pressed by over-institutionalized coercive forces, the civil rights space here should have involved no more than "privacy".[204] The notable emerging individualism and

[203] See Hu, Xiaobo (2002).

[204] See Asad (2003). Talat Asad discussed the boundaries between private sphere in the Islamic world, Iran for instance, referring to that where public intervening left and then privacy equivalent "secret", nevertheless the public here involves different understanding from the counterpart in the West.

individualist life style and increasing autonomous urban space developed in early 1990s largely remained within the "privacy" sphere. (Heberer, 1993; Davis et al., 1995) Even though the informal institutional protection of property rights constituted by embedded network power, according to localized and decentralized arrangements, which may account for the economic incentives and growth in past decades, seems confined to entrepreneurs rather than ordinary citizens.[205]

(2) Though endorsed by the Constitution, the rights of assembly, speech, protest, and association, lack support from substantial and procedure laws, and are strictly limited by special regulations and special institutions of coercive force in practice. For example, the rights of assembly and protest are actually unable to be realized due to the twofold *de facto* restriction: any assembly and protest should be approved by local police agency according to nation-wide local regulations of assembly and protest; and so far the officially approved assemblies or protests after 1989 are still very rare, whilst China's authority confirmed the actual "collective protests" nation-wide increased from about 10,000 in 1994 to 74,000 in 2004.[206]

Similarly, the general right of association and rights to organize and join trade unions are, on the one hand, limited by specific regulations as one of the basic means of social control institution and on the other hand, the positive (legal) space of associations and trade unions are largely squeezed out by the exclusive officially sponsored counterparts as previously stated (Shaw, 1996). Analogously, the concept of a free press makes no sense without any endorsement of legal statutes and whilst it remains under the control of the propaganda and censorship institution, while the general rights of free speech has to face coercive terror from the "national security clause" of the criminal law. [207]

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[205] Supra note 203. According to Hu, such informal institution of property rights may account for economic growth in China in the recent decades.

[206] See *South China Morning Post*, December 7, 2005. The report cited talk of Minister of Public Security of China, Zhou Yongkang, on December 5,2005.

[207] Media as a particular space for freedom of speech, where we are unable to find any plausible codified "rights" of expression except highly-institutionalized propaganda-censorship machine, see Zhao, Yuezhi, *Media, market, and democracy in China: between the party line and the bottom line*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998.

Regarding the state of citizens' political rights, despite recent developments in community elections (see Heberer and Schubert, 2006), they are seemingly still confined to the "political class" of the Party/state – the term Staniszkis (2000) uses to refer to the situation in post-communist countries instead of the vague concept of political elites – and "praetorian public sphere" – borrowing Huntington's terms, non-institutionalized patterns of political participation within praetorianism politics makes any development of political rights uncertain.[208]

(3) In the annual official reports on human rights and social development, in the official publications from the mid-1990s, one can not find the term "social rights", instead, the propaganda offers the dicthotomy of "survival rights and developmental rights" without clear definition. It was from the point when China's government signed two human rights covenants of the UN during the period of 1997 and 1998 (i.e. the "International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights" and "International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights") that the concept of social rights in conjunction with human rights became legitimized. This then began creeping into China's society and influencing policy-making, although since then the Party neither sought to have it known by the people, nor have the NPC's lawmakers ratify the two covenants.

In short, if following Giddens' insight into the self-reference of modernity, the citizenship in present-day China may perfectly reflect the paradoxical transformation of the authoritarian regime and thus theoretically defines the self-referential nature of the citizenship movement.

6.3.1.3 The Political Opportunity Structure of NSMs

In practice, the "praetorian public sphere" (Linch, 1999) is controlled by a complex of repressive-regulative (but lowly-institutionalized) working rules, whilst the statute of laws have increasingly

[208] In his book, Lynch argued although Chinese state has lost a significant degree of control, praetorianism will persist and politics will remain uninstitutionalized, unless military leaders themselves develop effective political institutions (Lynch, 1999:5).

However, he noted property rights reform is among three kinds of development leading to the loss of control.

expanded guarantees to civil rights and human rights in the past decade under the political promise of the Party's "rule by law" which was made at the Party's congress in 1992.

Along with the resulting implicit boundaries, such paradoxical citizenship institutions suggest a considerable huge gap between the increasing demands for concrete rights and increasing social disappointment derived from the political promise of civil rights and human rights. Henceforth, citizenship, both statutory and cognitive, seems to lack practical legitimacy to deal with the de-institutionalization move of asserting rights organizations, but empowers the normative legitimacy for them and then gives rise to the possibility and space to be re-defined and re-structured by this emerging social force and the new category (contentious) politics.

From the above political nature of citizenship in authoritarian China, the involvement of citizenship in whatever degree means the politicization of social organizations. That is to say, the politicization of NSOs occurred actually prior to the rise of later asserting rights movements, in the morphological order.

On the other hand, the proceeding of social movements too involved far more NSOs and then politicized them within the frame of the citizenship-centred contentious politics. The politicization as a specific structuration of NSOs was subject to the structure of political opportunity of social movements, which could only be recognized after the social movements were fully understood. That is what this dissertation seeks to do.

For example, marking the starting point of NSO's politicization, FLG's contentions have illustrated us a case of politicization from a "moral-cultural movement" to a global protestant movement. In the FLG's trajectory, the pursuit of healthy rights and self-association rights since the early 1990s was defined by the authority as "seeking to subvert the state's authority". It was prior to the sitting protest that FLG held in 1999. It was such a politicized repression that helped to mobilize ordinary FLG exercisers and then transformed FLG's movement into a global campaigns

against police violence and then the authoritarianism regime after 1999. Only after that, political rights eventually permeated into the evolution process of FLG's politicization.

In short, analogous to T.H. Marshall's notion, the *Qigong* movement started with filling health and moral demanding and thus raised the self-protection campaigns, involving the social rights, civil rights and political rights in turn. As the prototype of politicization, this trajectory theoretically falls into a quadripartite structure of Giddensian political opportunity (see Figure 6.2). In which, Marshall's threefold categorization of civil rights, political rights, and social rights is re-matrixed into a quadripartite structure of structuration – sanctions, authoritative structures, allocative

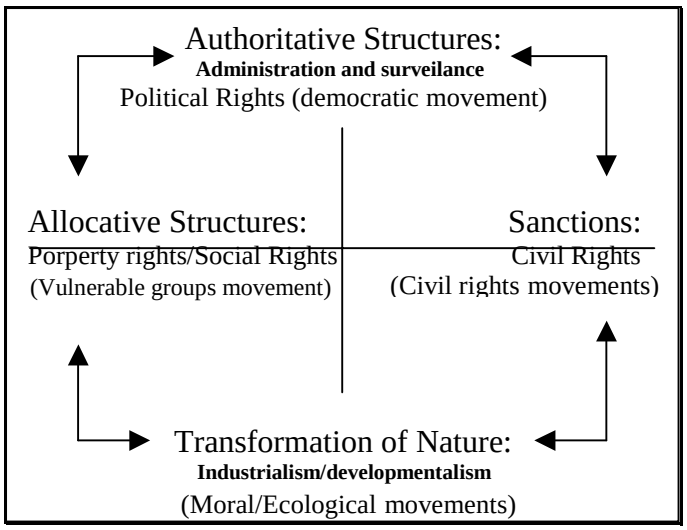

Figure 6.2: The Politicization of NSOs (also the construction of social boundaries)
Source: Revised version of David Jary(1991:140), whose original figure combined separate maps provided by Giddens (1985).

structures, and moral/ecological movements. They correspond to fourfold boundaries of citizenship in modern society: civil rights, political rights, social rights and ecological rights respectively, constituting the political opportunity structure of the "asserting rights movements", for "social movements reflecting challengers' perspectives emerge and press for changes in rules and organizational arrangements, often at the boundary between major societal institutions" (Ingram et al., 2002).

From this point, one can identify specific boundaries and then the opportunity structure of the expanding citizenship that is involved in the "asserting rights movements" after 2003 as follows:

- House-owner movements: Property Rights of householding (including shared rights) and associated community interests; Civil Rights to self-organizing house owner associations;
- Environmental movements: Ecological Rights to maintain the lifestyle of local residents;[209]
- Labour rights movements: Labour Rights to gain decent payments, working conditions, and compensation for work (employment) injury, to organize trade union;
- Anti-judicial injustice movement: Civil Rights for just and independent trial counter-weighting police violence and abuse;
- Tian'anmen Mother's movements: Political Rights of "political vindication" and state compensation for victims in massacre on June 4th 1989, etc.
- Pro-Gao and Chen's movements: Political Rights of non-institutionalized contention; and Civil Rights of speech and association.

Morphogenetically, during the boundary-spanning processes of social movements, as Tilly's historical studies of contentions in the Europe, such a concept of citizenship in practice means the establishment of specific detached identities (citizen and non-citizen) and the process of citizenship expansion means a broad shift from embedded to detached identity (Tilly, 2004: 61, 211).

Following Tilly's insights, I propose a line of the expansion of citizenship from the above movements: (1) The shift to this detached identity is from the conventionally social relations and authoritarian institutions, i.e. the embedded identity derived from *Unit System* and *Guanxi*; (2) The construction of social consciousness of citizenship relies on the establishment of the new detached identity of citizenship; (3) When NSOs put it in the central claim-making, citizenship becomes the "project identity" of NSOs and the new political identity communities; (4) And then, the social

[209] According to Cheng Qin, a graduate student of East China Normal University, who conducted a fieldwork in August 2004 in Zhongdian county (i.e. Xiang Ge Li La county in Yunnan province, where the Salween Dam located), the local residents began to impose minority rights and "social stability in minority area" into the agenda-setting against Salween Dam project since 2003. Such assertions have no-doubt more political correctness within Chinese Party-state beyond either economic development or environmental protection.

boundary mechanism functions along specific fourfold boundaries of citizenship, both cognitive and normative.

6.3.2 NSOs as Social Movement Organizations

Without exception, all these movements have proposed new cognitive norms along gaps between increasing "rights-centred" expectations and restrictive but implicit regulative institutions of social control, where the external opportunity structure of the "norm oriented" social movements of NSOs come into being.

Nevertheless, as Kenneth Andrews observed from civil rights movements in the west, such an external structure of political opportunity might not directly cause the social movements in some instances, instead, the movements "can be generated through in the interactions with like-minded persons in a social movement community" (Andrews, 2002:113). The creative interaction, cultural ecology and entrepreneurship may probably provide the exhausted answers for the formation of political identity (Tilly, 2003).

6.3.2.1 Building Political Identity Community

The foregoing cyber-activism embedded within the everyday-life habitualization of online posting/protest has reminded us of the importance of a structural/institutional mobilization basis for the transformation towards political identity and that such external political opportunities, framed by the above asserting rights movements, should be structurally built through the politicization of everyday life.[210] In the social life, as those lowly-institutionalized restrictive institutions of social control point to, these asserting rights movements and NSOs do rise in the waning of the specific social control institution – ***Unit System*** – in urban China.

[210] To be stressed, Taylor and Whittier (1992) noted an analogous micro mobilization process during the formation of collective identity for lesbian feminists.

Within ancient Greek political philosophy the institutions of community and society were not distinguished. Though around 1800 Johann Gottfried Herder suggested a distinction between society and community, the understanding of community was still bound by a religious vocabulary and remained largely unchanged in Tönnies ([1887] 1991) and Durkheim ([1893] 1933) where the community was linked with the archaic past based on family and providing a feeling of holism or "mechanical solidarity". Developed to the 1950s, following Parsonsian functionalism sociology Rene König argued "vehemently against Tönnies' dichotomy and use of the Gemeinschaft (community) concept", the concept of society emerged again to describe and analyze social organizations.[211]

Despite later developments – there emerged a debate between communitarianism and liberalism around community and citizenship, which eventually resulted in a merger of liberal communitarianism and then the merging use of society and community – in this study, the community refers to social and political organizations in the broadest sense and on varying levels, distinguishing the specific organizational boundary of society and representing concrete societal units.

Henceforth, the urban communities as social boundaries on a mesostructural level may reflect "the character and effectiveness of the social integration of the larger society" in Smelser's (1997: 48) sense, as well as Charles Taylor's three-fold cataloguing where modern communities are differentiated from small social media linking traditional social life, and peasant societies and small-scale tribal communities accordingly.

Here I sketch the *unit system* as once the normative resource of urban life in the past at stake and then the cause of the structural cleave between the praetorian public sphere and emerging liberal public sphere in recent decade (Lynch, 1999).

[211] See B. Strath (2001).

The ***Unit System,*** as stemming from military life in the revolutionary era of CCP, then institutionalized in the 1970s but still developed in the 1980s, has centred the social control and social life of Chinese cities for a long time (Walder, 1986; Li, 1994; Shaw, 1996; Lynch, 1999; Bakken, 2000; Liu, 2000).[212] Within almost half century, the *Unit System* is a basic form of social organization, structuring the Party-governmental apparatus, military organizations, industry and financial organizations and factories, social associations and foundations and so on into a hierarchical totality of these social units. Hence, the *unit system* functioned as the carrier of social control through two ways:

- Organizes and mobilizes residents in cities, henceforth symbolizing social status and identification of urban citizens; and,
- Provides collective welfare for unit members and their families, including the distribution of foods, supply of medical care and elementary education, etc.

That is the structural correspondence of the implicitly-defined citizenship. Within the boundaries of the holistic shelter of the *Unit System*, among urban residents, the social identity of "Unit Personnel" functioned as the normative mediating between the Party/state and individuals in an authoritarian regime. After one decade of marketization in China the latter, on the other hand, as Frazier (2002) observed, the collapse of "'iron rice bowl' of comprehensive cradle-to-grave benefits and lifetime employment", changed the re-distributional society/community in Polanyi's sense, and induced the new community relationship stemming from the everyday life in China's urban society.

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[212] Regarding the social control in general, since perhaps most prominent American sociologist in the 19th century Edward A. Ross ([1901] 1969) who launched theory of social control, it was emphasized "how law and other forms of state-centered social control emerged as the central guarantors of social order over the course of social evolution" in classic view (Horwitz, 1990:1). In effect, it may be viewed as aggregation of social norms and other formal or informal institutions to protect social order embedded in concrete social relationships.(Horwitz, 1990:1-5) Precisely, it is embedded in what Smelser refers, "groups, formal organizations, social movements, and some aspects of institutions" i.e. meso-institutions (Smelser, 1997:28).

In the post state-socialist countries like China, social control is still a key concept favoring understanding the interconnection between SOs and contextual institutions, and then SOs' evolution. Prior to the mid-1990s, most of literatures concentrated on aspects like political movements, "washing brain", "thought work", exemplary propaganda, segregation system between the urban and the rural, and workplace system (*Unit System*), etc. They have allegedly reflected the societal change since the 1970s.

By now, some *Unit-System*-attached social control institutions still remained, like personal documentary system (*Dang'an System*), rank/cadre system (*Gangbu System*), and residential registration system (*Huji System*).

(1) Ruan and associate's empirical studies discovered the *Unit System*-based social network (*guanxi*) highlighted in the 1980s (e.g. Walder, 1986) began to be weakened during the market economy transition and replaced to some extent by new social networks of urban residents. (Ruan et al., 1997)

(2) The conventional SOs, among one of *Units* in the 1980s and the 1990s, were also logically influenced by such the waning trend of the *Unit System*. As mentioned previously, most of the early ENGOs like FON in the mid-1990s still followed the organizational form of *Unit System*. Significantly, the following development of the "commercial forms" of the newly-established NGOs and the professionalization of NGO workers since late the 1990s actually reflected the decreasing constraints of *Unit System*. Whilst some Chinese scholars insisted *Unit System* might make no sense for the majority of SOE workers to date, it was still maintained in party-governmental apparatus and some large-scale SOEs and some SOs. (Zhou, 2000)

(3) Once the "welfare housing distribution" policy was declared abolished by the State Council in 2000, the *Unit System* eventually lost its most important re-distributional function of collective welfare, and was then replaced by the housing privatization during the process of rapid urbanization nation-wide. [213]

"By the end of the 1990s, following two decades of rapid economic growth and housing construction, per capita living space in urban China more than doubled, to almost 10 square metres per person... the proportion purchased by individuals rose from about a third in 1991 to about half in 1995, and to 80% in 1999."[214] According to the 2000 census data, Wang (2003) found by 2000 about three-quarters of urban Chinese households owned their housing units, nearly half of which

[213] More literature about the evolution of *Unit System* and related social-political impacts on China's society, see Li and Wang (1996), Yang and Zhou (1999), Nee (1989, 1991, 1996).

[214] See Wang Feng (2003).

Yet Wang noticed the interesting inequality of the housing distribution: "In 2000, urban Chinese living in households headed by government or Party officials enjoyed nearly 50% more living space per person compared with those living in households headed by ordinary workers. There are about three times as many worker-headed households as cadre-headed households remaining in crammed housing units." (Wang, 2003:138)

were benefited from housing reform of their *Units*. Henceforth, the large-scale private-property-rights based new residential areas (communities) with relatively clear boundaries emerged in China's big cities and those areas with good economic performance. The landscape of China's urban space thus was essentially changed.

(4) However, as Lau (2001:617) rightly noticed that "the formation of workers' fraternities of migrant workers from the same native place" since the gradual breakdown of the *Unit System*-based conventional form of social-political control in urban China, there has emerged a certain space for some new social organizations. Those broadly-noticed auto-organized civil associations since the mid-1990s (Brook, 1997), like Qigong associations (Chen, 1995), alumni associations and hometown associations (Whyte, 1992), do reflect such a situation.

Such self-organized "civic organizations" raised a civil society discourse in the first half of the 1990s, nevertheless it was largely confined to the circle of intellectuals (See Gu, 1994; Derichs, Heberer and Sausmikat, 2004) and their implication for a probable civil society were under-estimated by Brook (1997) and Metzger (1998). For them, the term civil society was merely "a filtered concept" rather than a reality in China. But, a new cognitive expectation about possible new communities within urban space began to ferment since then on.

In this context, the emerging social categories raised a new wave of public discourse that "urban social groups in China are increasingly pressing for a voice in political discussion" (Liu, 2003), such as "social vulnerable groups" (社会弱势群体), "peasant workers" (民工), "private entrepreneurs" (私营企业家), "Netizens" (网民) and so on.[215] These concepts were rapidly popularized and verified by Chinese sociologists through their positive studies, while some of were even reflected in official rhetoric and henceforth became a socially shared consciousness – the

[215] Cf. Kluver's use of Netizens (2005:314).

social cognition about the social boundaries – in conjunction with the "creation of cultural boundaries" of habitualized cyber-protest since the late 1990s.[216]

On the other hand, these social categories offer an interpretive framework for NSOs to translate holistic social differentiation into the normative resource of social expectations to build a "rights-centred" political community. The conception of "asserting rights" here functions in cultivating new normative expectations by which ordinary people tend to understand the relative gap between changed social relations and institutions – the social boundaries reflected in categories of Cadre/Worker/Peasant – and the new norms as a response of changed *Unit-System*.[217]

For instance, marked with the event of the tortured death of Sun Zhigang in March 2003 and then the rise of a civil rights movement with specific assertion to change the "custody-and-repatriation system", the social cognition of the inequality and injustice implied by categories, such as "social vulnerable groups (underprivileged social groups)" that include the peasant workers, the laid-off workers and the poor in cities, become widely-accepted. This expectation even took over the official rhetoric, and led to the eventual abolition of that "regulation of custody-and-repatriation" in June 2003.[218]

Hence, the spill-over of "social vulnerable groups" like social categories as cognitive carriers, concretizes the political opportunity structures into the explicit expectations of social justice and new category politics of NSOs after 1998/99. In which, the "asserting rights"-centred interpretation/agitating actions of NSOs combine two processes: the "creation of commitment"

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[216] See Zheng Hangsheng (2003), one of leading sociologists in China, the General Preface for Socilogical Library, in *Social Structure of the Cities in Contemporary China*, edited by Zheng Hangsheng and Li Lulu, p.3, Beijing: Renmin University of China, 2004.

In this Preface, Zheng used these concepts to prove sociology and sociological terminologies become more influential in China's sociopolitical life.

[217] In his *Rational Lives: Norms and Values in Politics and Society*, Dennis Chong observed such social adjustment in response to the new norms that "if they are reoriented to an alternative set of conventions and norms, they have a tendency to see those new standards to be proper and normal also" (Chong, 2000:190-1).

Here, we observed similar phenomena of public's attitude change over 2003 via direct observation and interviews in 2004, nevertheless lacking support from third-party's empirical evidence.

[218] See details in former note 177.

(Gamson, 1975) and "consensus mobilization" (Klandermans, 1988); and thus lead to a substantial change of "linguistically generated intersubjectivity" in Habermas' (1987) terms.

On these expressive "actions" NSOs and NSMs relied – mainly in the forms of joint-letters or petition movements – the relation of "intersubjectivity" has been essentially changed toward a new political community with a shared consciousness of "asserting rights", or more precisely, the asserting rights movement community.

6.3.2.2 The Mechanism of NSOs as SMOs

Strictly speaking, the boundary of the asserting rights community seems too implicit to measure in the real world, unless as the latest development of category politics shows in cases of Taishi village event and pro-Chen campaign. In these cases, the external structuration effects of NSOs (i.e. the formation of the political communities on the common basis of shared asserting-rights consciousness or expectations) were demonstrated through NSOs' inter-penetration actions around specific institutional and social boundaries.

Likewise, the organizational trajectory of Green Beijing as well as FON's transformation since 2003, a Beijing-based ENGO that was engaged in public-benefit environmental projects and turned to asserting rights actions in the recent past for farmers in inner-Mongolia who suffered pollution damage but failed in achieving compensation through institutional means (such as litigation), also suggests those NSOs may not automatically transform to SMOs or join the asserting rights community. Rather, the ENGOs appear to be passively involved in or induced by the new category politics of NSOs that precipitates such a boundary change of ENGOs.

Specifically, the categorical politics of NSOs, underlined in the foregoing cases of asserting rights movements as their primary contentious forms, function as the social-constructivist mechanism and then the self-defined boundary of SMOs, that is, if and only if one NSO is

involved in whatever one of three-fold interpenetrations around the social/symbolic boundaries as follows it is politicized and then becomes an SMO of asserting rights movements:

- the fourfold boundaries of citizenship (civil rights, political rights, social rights, and ecological rights);
- the social boundaries separating spontaneously grassroots "rightful resistance" and asserting rights movements;
- and the boundary of asserting rights movements/networks as a whole.

These boundaries vary in form, as regulative institutions or contest arenas or networks according to the specific structuration of NSOs. The interpenetration of boundaries is also noted by O'Brien (2001) in terms of "boundary-spanning contention" to categorize the phenomenon of "rightful resistances" in rural China.

Compared with the twin social boundary mechanisms launched by Tilly (2004a) who distinguishes between precipitants of boundary change and the constitutive mechanism of boundary change – the former includes "encounter, imposition, borrowing, conversation, and incentive shift", the latter includes "inscription–erasure, activation–deactivation, site transfer, and relocation" – the proposed mechanism of "networking agitation" in asserting rights movements depends on the threefold modalities of the interpretive scheme, networking, and conversation, which are bound by the precipitator of boundary change.

Being a specific communicative action, the networking agitation ,which has been mentioned in preceding campaigns, includes online and offline agitating in ways of posting and face-to-face communication, offline saloons, field visiting, petition by joint letter and hunger strike, legal aids and litigation, etc. The street actions are seldom used by NSOs. These non-institutionalized means of category politics may not necessarily lead to substantial changes in certain institutional boundaries without effective mechanism linking institutional politics and the social movements.

Even the change of custody-and-repatriation institution in 2003 after the first wave of asserting right movement was finally made by the administrative (state council) and thus went roundabout to pass the legislative procedure of justice review proposed by those NSO activists.

Instead, using Luhmann's notion of interpenetration, they concentrate on the construction of the citizenship-oriented normative expectations and social cognition about disappointed social boundaries. Their expressive actions *per se* may not constitute the boundary change. Rather, their interpretation/agitating of the difference between the normative expectation and social cognition have profoundly expanded the intermediate domain of asserting rights movements, where their involvement in episodic events actually precipitates the "triggering factor" of changes in the form of social differentiation functioning in realistic society (Luhmann, [1984]1995:124, 240). That is the structural account of operative mechanism of NSOs as SMOs functioning in the interpenetration of boundaries.

In the next chapter, this "networking agitation" will be illustrated from the perspectives of NSO entrepreneurs and social network analysis.

6.3.2.3 Internet-based NSOs as Professional SMOs

Broadly speaking, the organizational structure centres the mainstream study of social movements, as the social movement organizations (SMOs) are by no means the only component of a movement mobilizing structure since the conception SMO entered the social movement literatures (see Zald and Ash, 1966; McAdam, McCarthy and Zald, 1988; McCarthy, 1996). Particularly, McCarthy and Zald (1973) first distinguished the professional social movement organizations (PSMOs) from the professional social movements, which were distinguished from so-called "SMO locals" by a very small or non-existent membership base and a very weak network of communications among adherents or members through email or the mass media in addition to a full-time deployed leadership and attempts to impart the image of 'speaking for a potential constituency' and influence policy toward that same constituency" (see McAdam, McCarthy and Zald, 1988: 717).

Relative to Hanspeter Kriesi's distinction of four types of formal organizations involved in social movements in democratic societies (SMOs, supportive organizations, movement associations and parties and interest groups), the early theories formulated by McAdam and collaborators above seem more of use in identifying the functional differentiation that occurs among different NSOs in the emerging social movements in the authoritarian regime.

In Chapter 4 and 5, the discovery of structural differentiation among different types of NSOs – formal NGOs, Internet-based NSOs, and professional asserting rights organizations, suggests two structural links between the NGOs' depoliticized orientation in early development and the later formation of hierarchic networks; and between the decentralized and de-institutionalized development of Internet-based NSOs raised the e-social movements and then cultivated a broadly poly-centred inter-NSO network as the social movement network through habitualized online postings and offline saloons.

It is to be stressed, that it is such networking cyberactivism that eventually evolves into the general activism of the asserting rights movement (i.e. the networking agitation) and thus becomes the criteria base of SMOs. From this point, during the proposed transformation from NSOs to SMOs (i.e. the deep structuration of NSOs), the two initially distinct features derived from the surface structuration (i.e. the transformation from SOs to NSOs) – mainly professionalism and volunteerism – influence the local forms of SMOs and then the movement of movements in the long run.

(1) Comparing the rise of professionalism in formal NGOs (in raising funds from INGOs) and their corporatist attitude in the asserting-rights movements, the professionalism is formed at the cost of the de-radicalization of NGOs. As well as their early development at price of depoliticization in the 1990s, it indeed contrasts the juxtaposition of radicalisation and institutionalisation in Zald and Ash's (1966) classic finding of SMOs in the democracy. In fact, ENGOs as the earliest group of formal NGOs launched in China had a distinct professionalism

vis-à-vis the mainstream SOs, but remained depoliticized for a long time until 2004. Even the latest development – the collective protest actions against Salween dam project and interest groups in 2005 – was corporately backed by the environmental agency.[219]

Nevertheless, such limited involvement in the social movements seems to be effective in gaining more social influence and henceforth a rational choice for formal NGOs. For example, a survey of FON's members accomplished in 2004 provides the collateral evidence: the correlation of recruiting new members and two factors – when the Internet was incorporated as a platform, and when FON began to be involved in asserting rights movements. As Figure 6.3 shows, the annual growth of new recruited members was substantially improved only after Internet became the most important media (about 38.4%) through which respondents began to contact FON since 1998,[220] and soared to 31.9% when FON was involved in asserting rights actions after 2004.

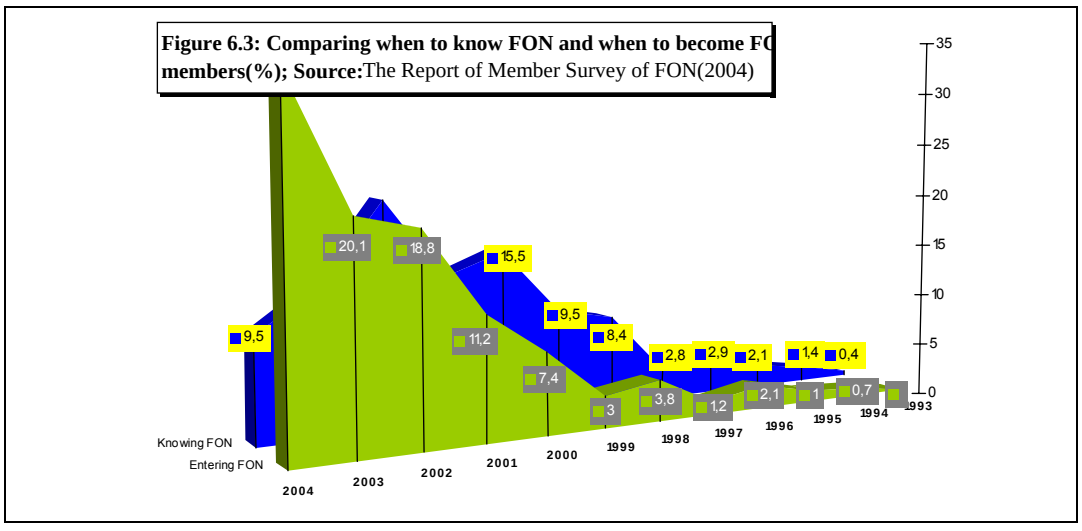

Figure 6.3: Comparing when to know FON and when to become FO members(%); Source: The Report of Member Survey of FON(2004)

(2) The Internet-based NSOs involved in on-going asserting rights movements appear to fall into the category of PSMOs defined by McCarthy and Zald (1973), nevertheless, such real cases of

[219] See *Beijing Review*, Jan.20, 2006, "Green Coalition", by Jing Xiaolei, available at: http://www.beijingreview.com.cn/06-CN/06-03/fm-2.htm. This news story confirmed the intense cooperative relation between ENGOs' actions and environmental agency in varying aspects, such as "the actions were encouraged by the environmental agency", "the environmental agency lacks more legitimacy", "the establishment of All China Environmental Protection Federal on April 22, 2006 marks the 'deepened cooperative relation between government and ENGOs", etc.

[220] See "The Report of Member Survey of FON (2004)", conducted by Wang Peng, Li Laiai, Zhang Shuo, Zhou Yu, online document, available at: http://www.fon.org.cn/backup/membersurvey.doc.

pure PSMOs were said to be hard to find in McAdam and McCarthy and Zald's empirical studies (McAdam, McCarthy and Zald, 1988:717).

- There are a few leaders who devote their full time to Internet-based agitating and asserting rights movements. Such as the famed political dissident Liu Xiaobo, operating as the president of ICPC, whose travel outside Beijing is under surveillance and who lives totally on free writing and Internet writing after he was released in 1994 from a five-year prison term; and Yu Jie, another Internet/opinion leader as the representative of the new generation of liberal intellectuals, who is fully deployed by asserting rights-related writing and agitating. [221]
- Developed from habitualized cyber-protests, one can not find any paper membership except the organizers of numerous Internet-based NSOs and those famed asserting rights activists whose names frequently appear on the joint-letters.
- Almost all campaigns mentioned in this study have indicated the attempts to construct the "imagination" and "self-protection" toward the potential constituency of asserting rights communities.

Compared with the professionalism effects upon formal NGOs, the habitualized online posting-derived cyberactivism may be viewed as an alternative "online volunteerism" as the preceding case of a purely e-civic association Light of Hope (LOH) shows. The online volunteerism or the habitualization of online protest *per se* requires far more time invested in online surfing and communicating individually and collectively, thus constitutes the "participatory culture" in Jenkins (2006)' term of cyberactivism and then the generalized activism of PSMOs.

Besides case studies, such online volunteerism can be measured by a bundle of quantitative indicators including online service hours, frequency of participating joint letters, frequency of posting, etc. Further studies are necessary in the future. Nevertheless, the biannual statistics by

[221] Cf. interview with Liu Xiaobo, on March 6, 2006; and interview with Yu Jie, on February 28, 2006.

CNNIC provides additional collateral evidence as the following Figure 6.4 shows. The average level of consuming hours of Internet users soared to 13 hours per week during the first half of 2003 when the death of Sun Zhigang kindled a cyber protest and then changed to an asserting rights movement and increased to 16.5 hours by 2006. Among this increasing trend, those who are used to viewing or participating in e-forum discussions spend over 18 hours per week.[222]

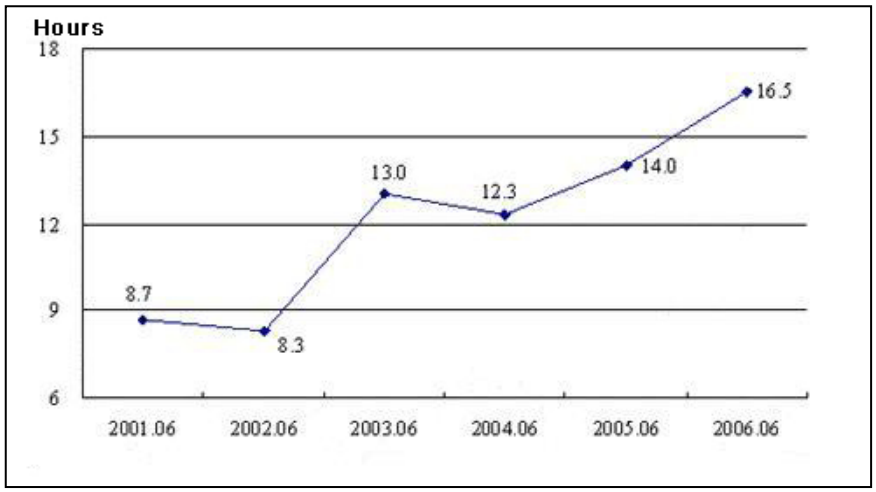

Figure 6.4: The average consuming hours of Chinese Internet users (2001-2006)
Source: The 18th statistics report of the development of China's Internet by CNNIC, July 19, 2006

(3) In a broader sense, if, taking into account the original conception of the local forms of SMOs launched by John Lofland (1985), one can also see the Internet-based NSOs as the local forms of asserting rights movements, for these movements actually evolved from and yet relied on the e-social movements. That is to say, the theoretical distinctions between "PSMOs" and "SMO locals" may be not much sense in China, except the neighbourhood-based house-owner associations that seem close to Lofland's local form of SMOs. [223]

[222] See "The Second Investigation of the Development of Internet Communities in China", conducted and published by Comsenz and CPCW on September 21, 2006, an online document, available at: http://2006vote.discuz.net/report.pdf .

[223] Lofland (1985) refers to various forms of "SMO locals"to the associations sustained by volunteers, or bureaus employing staffers, or troups deploying soldiers, or communes composed family members.

See also McAdam, McCarthy and Zald (1988: 717).

6.3.2.4 Rethinking the Nationalism Movement

Vis-à-vis the large-scale street protests in 2004/2005, the distinct nationalist movement raises our special concerns regarding the role of nationalist e-forum-based NSOs. Strictly speaking, only in the nationalist movement can we see large-scale street protests/marches in urban China in recent years and the "smart mobbing" phenomenon.[224] This development in association with the mainstream asserting rights movements thus urge me to re-examine it from Internet-based nationalist NSOs.

On April 9, 2005, over 10 thousand young Chinese people aggregated in front of the Hailong Building, which was located at the centre of Zhongguancun (the Beijing's sillicon village and university area), and then started a march toward the Japanese Embassy at Beijing.[225] The slogans and banners in the march focused on "Defend Diaoyu Island", "Oppose Japanese Commodities", "Oppose Japanese Militarism". A week later, a nationwide protest wave was ignited and spread over other big cities, such as Chengdu, Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Shanghai, Xiamen, etc. On April 16, 2005, the protest rally in Shanghai involved over one hundred thousands of young protesters.[226] According to online observation, most of the participants reported via posts in BBS/e-forums after that day that they did not know previously about the protest through the Internet. Rather, they were informed by mobile texts (SMS) just before or during the rally.[227] It shows that an SMS culture based on translocal networks of mobile-phone and Internet as the pre-condition of "smart mobs" has forged ahead in present-day China.[228]

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[224] As Rheingold noticed, the first "smart-mob" emerged in the Philippines in the early 2001, when President Joseph Estrada "became the first head of state in history to lose power to a smart mob" (Rheingold 2002:157).

[225] See BBC report on April 9, 2005, available at: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/4427379.stm.

[226] Despite most of public media reported protesters less than 30 thousands, a participant (Liang Jie, an Internet activist, also a post-graduated student in Shanghai) said estimated number might actually be over 100 thousands.

[227] See also *United Daily News* (Taipei), April 18, 2005.

[228] By July 2005, China's mobile phone users increased to 363 millions, and over 217.7 billions of texts (SMS) were sent in 2004. See BBC news, August 10, 2005 (http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/business/4137180.stm), and *China Daily* on January 10, 2005(http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/english/doc/2005-01/20/content_410864.htm)

Tegic Communications' Texting Survey also reveals new trends in the 'Text Culture' of China: "More people choose texting, over e-mail or telephone, for communications; 86 percent will use text to wish friends a "Happy New Year"; 61 percent have sent a text message to ask someone out on a date; and 22 percent have texted their boss to say they are too sick to come to work." Online document, available at: http://www.tegic.com/press_view.html?release_num=55254337 .

By 2007, it is not the first but the largest street protest after May 9 1999. After China's Embassy in Belgrade was bombed by a U.S. B2 Stealth bomber in the night of May 8, 1999, millions of Chinese students went onto the streets and joined the march for the first time after 1989. These protestors were deemed the so-called "fourth generation" who were under thirty and the first time demonstrated on China's political stage (Gries, 2004: 4). However, only two years later, such nationalist protests seemed to have changed, due to the Internet. When an American EP3 spy plane and a Chinese F-8 jet fighter collided over South China Sea, the Internet/BBS-presented "new nationalism" flared in the morning of April 1, 2001 (Li and Qin, 2001) but signaled a different tendency that "the Communist Party has lost its hegemony over Chinese nationalist discourse" (Gries, 2004:136).

Then, could we take the latest nationalist protests for granted as a result manipulated by the Party-state, or by contrast, see it as an illustration of an e-social movement "from cyberspace to street"?[229] Similar controversial puzzle was also confronted by the NSOs that were involved in the nationalist protests above. Nevertheless, the threefold observation from the field may help us understand the nationalist protests in most of cases.

(1) Though the mainstream nationalist NSOs, like Tong Zeng's Defending Diaoyu Island group or the circle of nationalist activists in Beijing, denied connections with "April 9" protest and kept themselves at a distance from that action,[230] the "April 9" action was still launched and

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In Cartier, Castells and Qiu's (2005) essay, they observed a widely-existed social group of information "have-less" locating in the middle of the binary distinction between information "haves" and "have-nots", who are mainly consisted of "rural-to-urban migrants, laid-off workers, state-sector employees, pensioners, and other low-income groups that populate the have-less category constitute an enormous user base for a range of lower-end ICTs in China. These technologies include prepaid phone cards, short message service (SMS), Internet cafés run by small-scale private entrepreneurs, and 'Little Smart' telephones—wireless extensions of the fixed-line telephone network that function like mobile phones within a delimited area."

[229] For instance, Prof. Markus Taube expressed his doubt over the sceptical role of Chinese government in the large-scale nationalist protest and tended to see it as no different to traditional mass protest organized by the communist party in the past. See *Netzeitung*'s interview on April 22, 2005, available at: http://www.netzeitung.de/spezial/globalvillage/335132.html.

[230] See Hu's talk on April 10 2005, available at: http://www.secretchina.com/news/articles/5/4/10/91851.html.

Yu Jie, among the "Internet/public opinion leaders" in China, verified such dis-connection between that large-scale nationalist street protest and those liberal NSOs/eforums. See interview with Yu Jie, March 1, 2006, Beijing.

organized by a few nationalist NSOs.[231] It does not necessarily mean that the authority might have controlled the "smart mobs" of "April 9th " protest, but, instead, point out a fragmented or heterarchical structure of nationalist NSOs.

(2) On the other hand, due to the consideration that "popular nationalism can threaten the Party's legitimacy" (Gries, 2004: 125), the respondents reported the collective actions of "organized nationalism", like "Defending Diaoyu Island" groups (Gries, 2004:121-125), were doubted by the authority all the time.

(3) Those leading nationalist NSOs and activists were under tight surveillance and hampered from involving such street actions, including Tong Zeng and Wang Xuan who launched the campaign "Asserting compensation for war victims" since the middle 1990s. Then, it is not surprising to find that the networks of nationalist NSOs and pro-democracy NSOs are actually overlapped.[232] The authoritarian suppress over the expressive freedom of nationalist protests eventually shifts the boundary of nationalism campaigns toward the civil rights movements, as the fate of Yang Maodong (pseudonym as Guo Feixiong) shows.[233]

In this context, perhaps no one could easily deny the possibility that the extreme nationalist emotion expressed in the '*China Can Say No*' and protests on May 8, 1999 against America's bombing of China's Embassy in Belgrade could evolve or contain a somewhat oppositional consciousness against the Party-state's control over time. Although their patriotism on the surface seemingly falls into the category of the official nationalism, these actions actually present the

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[231] See *Die Tageszeitung* (Berlin), April 11, 2005, Georg Blume reported from Beijing.

For example, the nationalist website(http://www.wwgc.cc/) hosted by Wang Jinsi(aged 31), was banned by local police in association with those influential e-forums which declared "irrelevant" in this protest.

[232] A number of nationalist activists were investigated or detained after an offline saloon of Yannan e-forum launched on April 22 2005, in which some pro-democracy Internet activists (e.g. Wen Kejian, Du Daobin, and Yu Zhangfa) and nationalism activists (e.g. Feng Jinhua, Yang Maodong) aggregated together for planning a nationalist protest. See http://www.epochtimes.com/gb/5/5/15/n922043.htm.

[233] Guo was detained on April 26 2005 after he made a protest application against Japan on May 4th to local police agency. Before that, "China Federation of Defending Diaoyu Islands" Beijing office was investigated on April 23 2005. Available at: http://peacehall.com/cgi-bin/news/gb_display/print_version.cgi?art=/gb/pubvp/2005/04&link=200504261405.shtml. See Yang maodong's (Guo Feixong) essay of his 17-days being detained, available at: http://cdp1998.org/details.asp?detailsid=2160.

discontent structure of the nationalist NSOs. It contrasts the statism embedded in the official nationalism as Zheng (1999) observes – they penetrate the threefold social boundaries within the authoritarian regime as follows, which are politicized by the authority's media control and repression over nationalist NSOs and activists *ex post* the campaigns:

- the street-protest march as an almost impossible contention form;
- the mobilization by means of mobile text (SMS);[234]
- The network connection between nationalist NSOs and other asserting rights NSOs.

Then, it is fair to say that the "new nationalism movement" has remarkably shifted the nationalist symbolic boundaries engaged in mobilization onto a Giddensian contentious framework of social movements in practice. One can also see these nationalist NSOs as another local form of SMOs in the broadest new social movements as a whole.

Summary: According to Piotr Sztompka, a social movement must comprise the following constitutive components: "(1) A collectivity of people acting together. (2) The shared goal of collective action is some change in their society, defined by participants in similar ways. (3) The collectivity is relatively diffuse, with a low level of formal organization. (4) The actions have a relatively high degree of spontaneity, taking non-institutionalized, unconventional forms." (Sztompka, 1993: 275-76)

The above dynamic development of the rise of e-social movements, asserting rights movements and NSOs as SMOs are also characterized correspondingly as follows:

(1) It is a series of "relatively-diffused" but highly-spontaneously organized collective actions or episodic events/protests that constitute an emerging social movement in recent years;

[234] Hong Kong–based *Minpao* revealed on April 13 2005, Shanghai authority used bulk SMS in agitating and controlling protest.

(2) They raise the amazing social change along specific symbolic and social boundaries around citizenship institutions;

(3) Related protest actions are conducted in a lowly-institutionalized way where there are only "a low-level of formal organizations", especially those Internet-based NSOs functioning as PSMOs;

(4) From cyberprotests to street marches, the asserting rights campaigns have shown various non-institutionalized and unconventional forms of citizenship-centred public claim-making.

There are two worthwhile structural effects to be noted: within the "asserting rights" social movements, as far as I observed previously, various "asserting rights" campaigns are integrated into a loosely-connected NSO network. NSOs involved here as a whole act as social movements organizations. (See Figure 6.2)

Meanwhile, thanks to the redefining of the concrete boundaries of specific rights by NSOs' "agitating" at multiple levels, the asserting rights movements have replaced the abstract "democracy politics" in the 1980s with "rights politics" since the late 1990s, and thus differentiate NSO's contentious politics from intellectuals' elite politics in post-Mao era (see Fewsmith, 2001a). Through which, even pro-democracy activists turned to utilize NSOs and NSO networks in social mobilizing.

Chapter 7

NSOs AND NETWORK ENTREPRENEURS

The networking process

> "When networks dissolve time and space, people anchor themselves in places, and recall their historic memory."
>
> -- Manuel Castells ([1997] 2004:69)

In previous chapters, the formation processes of e-civil association and new social movements have verified to varying degree Wellman's notion of the "computer network as social network" (Wellman et al., 1996; Giddens et al., 2003), and demonstrated that the rapidly popularized computer-mediated communications and networks have dynamically penetrated the three-layer boundaries around NSOs (regulative, cognitive, and normative) and then reshaped the structure-institution of NSOs (legitimation, self-categorization, and politicization correspondingly).

Nevertheless, the above interpenetration processes are mainly about the transformation or politicization of NSOs between the external structuration and internal structuration. The core internal structuration, which is proposed to be comprised of the formation of NSO agents and associated networking as the mainstay of activism of NSMs, remains as yet unveiled.

This chapter therefore aims to further the activism from the habitualized posting/protest (online volunteerism) to the "networking agitation", through which a small group of "agents-in-focus" have established direct ties via face-to-face interaction on the basis of Internet-based many-to-many communications and habitualized online protest actions, i.e. the creation of NSOs in perspective of structural individualism. That is a transformation from the "identity entrepreneurs" to the "network entrepreneurs" in Burt's phrasing (2002), paralleling the transformation from cyberprotests to the formation of Internet-based NSOs (also as PSMOs). The former is

underpinned by the habitualized posting activism; the latter highlights the activism of NSOs, namely NEs' networking agitation.

Following Stones' (2005) dualism of internal structuration, the formation of "network entrepreneurs" involves two aspects: personal trajectory and network trajectory of NEs.[235] The personal trajectory represents highly individualized path towards the "network leaders" in Melucci's terms (1996). The network trajectory reflects NEs' networking agitation and associated outcome morphogenetically –the creation of NSOs.

Methodologically, the structural analysis here comprises three steps: the description of individual cases of agitating actions, drawing and modelling sociograms of personal networking, and further structural inquiry of the network of networks.

7.1 Network Entrepreneurs of China's NSO: based on in-depth interviews

7.1.1 Network Entrepreneurs: agent-in-focus in structuration

In Stones' framing of the "quadripartite nature of structuration", those "agents-in-focus" and their position can be understood as Melucci's network leaders, who have rich "conjuncturally-specific knowledge" of "position-practice relation", in particular, with "interpretative schemes, power capacities, and normative expectations" – three ontologically inter-related aspects of structures picked out by Giddens" (Stones, 2005: 91). Thus they function as the agents of Giddens' modalities of structuration mediating the "interaction and structure in processes of social reproduction." (Giddens, [1976] 1993:129)

In the long run, such "position-practice relation" tends to be habitualized into what Giddens called "institutionalized structural properties" of stabilized relationships among agents/actors across time and space" (Giddens, 1984: xxxi). It is analogous to Burt's concept of network

[235] Supra note 148.

entrepreneurs who are "rich in strong and weak ties alike, are able to fill structural holes by between others…" (Burt, 1992; Anheier, [2000] 2003)

Following Granovetter's argument on weak ties to the study of innovation diffusion (Granovetter, 1973:1365-1369; 1982: 117), in his "Structural Holes and Good Ideas" (Burt, 2004), Burt notes the flow of "good ideas" in a given network (i.e. e-forum-based public discourse processes and movement mobilization) reflects the hypothesis that network entrepreneurs are key to the "network reproduction" of social network. Good ideas here matter to network entrepreneurs due to their "adding value to ties" (Burt, 2002). Taking "adding value to ties" as a reason for deep structuration, the network growth for instance, the flow of "good ideas" *per se* suggests the structuration process, in accordance with early conclusions that NSOs are symbolically constructed, NSMs are symbolic movements, and NSO activists are self-categorized as a new category of public intellectuals.

For example, as previous case of Wang Yi shows, his expressive actions as the earliest and basic form of agitation actually had a surprising networking effect. During the process of diffusion of "constructive resistance", he became a "local bridge" connecting different networks at two levels: between the online community and offline society, and between local network (local liberal intellectual circle in Chengdu city or local e-community) and mainstream intellectuals and dissidents circles in Beijing. "Bridge" here involves networking growth in a twofold sense: cognition and network.

Theoretically, Wang's purpose-oriented expressive actions function as the social events (nodes of local bridge), aggregating and connecting a lump sum of local clusters (nodes of women) in the two-mode *Deep South* model Freeman (2000) visualized later (see Figure7.1). Here, it is mainly through Wang Yi's

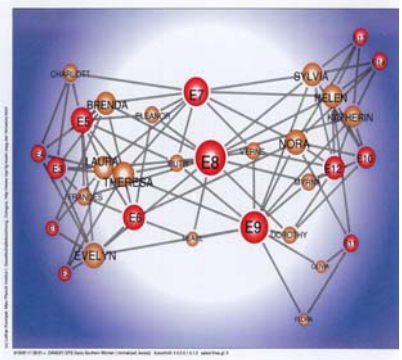


Figure 7.1: Two Mode Data on Women's Attendance at Social Events
Source: Data from Davis, Gardner and Gardner (1940), displayed by Linton Freeman(2000)
Note: Red nodes express 14 social events, brown nodes express 18 women. Hereby, Wang's role is analogous to the big red nodes in middle of graph.

writing in e-forums and print media and launching joint letters that relate to contingent cases are translated into "public events" and then eventually reshape the network structure, since the "network processes are series of events that create, sustain and dissolve social structures" (Doreian, 1997:3).

Therefore there are two dimensions in the process of NE-driven structuration: agent-in-focus, and network growing, in addition to the citizenship-oriented schema. During the structuration of China's NSOs, the ideal type of agent-in-focus might represent those multi-stake activists, who are rich in organizational capacities, network connections, and social influence on public/movement opinion in practice – in most instances, the trinity simultaneously converging on identity entrepreneurs, movement entrepreneurs, and network entrepreneurs.

Through about 50 interviewees, one can identify at least 11 trinity NSO leaders who have woven dense networks and been recognized as opinion leaders by other NSOs or the public.[236] Despite the pity that some ENGOs' leaders were missed off the informant list, the distribution of eleven NGO entrepreneurs has virtually reflected the difference in internal structural and closeness with NSMs between two groups of China's NGOs – ENGOs and Internet-based/liberal intellectuals NGOs. Over two thirds were of the latter, although interviewees who were of ENGOs weighed in at over half of the total samples.

These agents-in-focus are He, Wen, Liao, Chen, Gao, Qu, Xu, Hu, Du, Wang and Song (see Appendix I and Table 4.1). Amongst these are xie fully-deployed professional NGO entrepreneurs, four "almost full-day" professional entrepreneurs, and one semi-professional NGO entrepreneur.[237] Significantly, apart from Liao, Song and Du, whose ages were over fourty, the rest were all below thirty-five but with more than five years experience in related NGO fields, and all belonging to a new generation of intellectuals.

[236] Their specific social connections and influence were based on in-depth interviews and cross investigations, documentary materials and online observations.

[237] The latter five NGO entrepreneurs have highly flexible jobs—teacher, lawyer, and journalist. Wen, Liao and Gao are of ENGOs, Hu and Xu are of civil rights NGOs, and the rest are of Internet-based/intellectuals new NGOs.

Moreover, without exception, all of them are high-profile NGO initiators/leaders with highly held reputations in specific NGO circles, rich social connections and somewhat legendary personal histories for paving the way towards specific new social movements – including the "Anti-judicial injustice" movement, "Redressing Tian'anmen event" movement, "Helping AIDS/HIV orphans" actions, "Internet-based public discourse", "Anti-Mega Dam project in Salween river" campaign, the "Summer 26°C" actions, etc.

7.1.2 Network Entrepreneurs: definition and classification

Regarding a large network, Laumann et al. (1983) distinguished three possibilities for specifying system boundaries with a focus on actors, activities, and relationships. Pappi (1984) furthered this boundary-centred approach and attempted to build a social structure of the elite system – social circle model of social network analysis (SNA). From this newly developed social network perspective of social movement (see Diani and McAdam, 2003), SNA may be extended to cover network entrepreneurs, through which people can also observe the convergence of organization, social movement and social networks, and the construction process of identity.

Song Xianke and the Guangdong Humanism Association (GDHA) may be taken as an institutionalized outcome of such a converging process. Song and Tang, two founders of GDHA, said it was hard to imagine any official recognition of this provincial-level association before 2003. In that year, Sun Zhigang's death triggered a civil right movement from Guangzhou city, leading to the repeal of the custody-and-repatriation system in June, and the birth of the first fully liberal intellectual association in November. Within Guangzhou, GDHA assembled more than one hundred liberalist intellectuals and pro-democracy high-ranking Party's cadres into a community. [238]

[238] Prior to 2003, Song informally ran an active civil rights organization (Institute of Citizen Education) as a platform to organize offline saloons of GT eforum.

Even after officially recognition, GDHA was still an organization with highly political sensitivity in official view. On the same day of GDHA's opening conference, Guangdong provincial police bureau sent off a secret Fax to local "political-guardian (zhengbao)" agents requiring tight surveillance. Song was informed later by his friend in the police.(See Interview with Song Xianke on May 20 2004)

Assuming that the movements of NSOs were somehow like a business, it is on the basis of Song's GDHA networking-like "entrepreneurial networks" that Ronald Burt wrote "network entrepreneurs are people who build interpersonal bridges across structural holes." (Burt 2002) In practice, Hedström, Sandell and Stern (2000) described a social-gram of mesolevel networks and the diffusion of social movements in the case of Swedish Social Democratic Party. Helmut Anheier (2003) illustrated that the movement entrepreneurs (i.e. "single members" of NSDAP, National Socialist German Workers Party, 1925-1930) who come from existing organizations and social networks contributed as the "necessary mediators of national socialism through organizational and cultural 'framing'" and shaped the very important early development of the further paths of the party.

Following Burt-Lauman's hypothesis, this study focuses on network entrepreneurs at the meso-micro level and attempts to explore their structural effects on the NSOs' politics in the long term – i.e. the network of network entrepreneurs as the network of networks, whose existence and distribution is by no means confined to a specific network organization but probably "submerged movement networks" in Melucci's (1996) terms. The diffusion effects or the consolidation of NSOs may thus be spilled over through, and be verified by these networks, at a "sub-merged" level.

7.1.2.1 Definition

To measure the networking processes and flow of good ideas, both qualitative and quantitative approaches are necessary for this meso-micro level SNA. It requires an explicit framework to define concepts, sampling, data and methods of collecting and processing data, leading to a credible outcome.

Definition

The concept of a network entrepreneur, analogous to the previously used movement entrepreneur, is by no means derived from the political entrepreneur and is close to the organizational

entrepreneur but with a broader and uncertain relational boundary. In this sense, network entrepreneur does not rule out an overlap with the movement entrepreneur and organizational entrepreneur, either theoretically or practically in most cases.

The network entrepreneur involved here is not simply a bridge between two clusters or the "sociometric star" bound by a given closed social network which reflects the centrality of the whole network (see Scott, 2000:10). Rather, Burt's (1992, 2002) definition of network entrepreneurs – the richness of ties and their outstanding capacity to develop ties crossing structural holes – may be translated into two-fold networking agitation (the activism of movement entrepreneurs):

- those professional NSO activists who have rich ties/connections and background capacity;
- as a specific dynamic process of the "tie-making" across structural holes which are characterized by the weak ties, according to Burt.

The term Background capacity in Searle's sense, as previously stated is to explain how rules function – however, the rules are not self-interpreting (Searle, 1992:193). For NEs, such a Background capacity means agitating capacity. It is followed that the networkingly "tie-making" of network entrepreneurs are then assumed to emerge in such areas between active structural holes. In short, from the above cases of NSOs and NSMs, their function is not confined to generating or linking new weak ties, rather, they simultaneously behave as the "identity entrepreneurs" as I have illustrated in Chapter 5 (see also Derrida, 1976: 118) during the networking process. That is so-called networkingly agitating.

Data and Method

In general, I use in-depth interview to collect relational data. Since the detailed relation-related information, e.g. *Guanxi*, is likely to be tacit knowledge in Chinese society, it is thus difficult to collect data through normal questionnaire surveying. Semi-structured, in-depth interviews, lasting at least two and often three or more hours, based on sufficient trust and preparation, may probably

reveal enough clues about interpersonal ties and carry out the cross investigation to test the reliability of data. In this sense, the size of target samples is limited by the maximized number of in-depth interviewees.

Nevertheless, the in-depth interview per se suggests to us an anthropological social network analysis rather than a sociological SNA. The latter requires large-scale surveys and Pajek-like computational software to process large-scale data as previously used. Pajek also lacks the function of visualizing multi-level networks and makes us more simulations in use rather than visualizing.

7.1.2.2 Three Types of Network Entrepreneurs

According to the previously discussed topic of the professionalism in the voluntary sector, one can first of all rule out those unintended NEs, who only have weak intention in organizing networks and whose inter-connections appear more like the "*guan xi*",[239] and then sort those 15 interviewee samples – whom I have conducted in-depth interviews with – into three types of network entrepreneurs via three indicators: whether full time-deployed, strength of intentions, and boundary specification of connectedness.

Type I: *Merged NEs*. For example, Gao Tian and Fu Tao, such a kind of NEs is merged by the platforms they engaged. Gao was the founder of Green-web, an internet-based network NSO at Beijing, while Fu is currently the director of China Development Brief, a non-profit magazine at Beijing. Their network platforms evolved into a loosely-connected "electronic social networks", and simultaneously, an institutional subscriber network. Given such mainly weak-tied networking, both Gao and Fu's business were invested to maintaining platforms *per se* instead of networks, and, to a large extent, the identities of network members are equivalent with their NSOs.

[239] For example, since my fieldwork set forth in Beijing, the first "gatekeeper" or "local hub person" I intended to meet, Mr. Zhu, was just a non-purposed "hub" in his own word. He referred that he belonged to at least seven circles simultaneously—the movie reviewers, movie directors, independent television producers, amateur digital video, movie BBS, geographic magazines, and freelancers for international television media. All these networks are mainly derived from his higher education at Beijing University and graduate studying at Beijing Movie Institute. In addition, he is directly involved in ENGO's circle in Beijing by renting out his apartment to one student ENGO. In this sense, I would rather label him as a weak or amateur NE differed from those active strong or professional NEs.

Type II: *Amateur NEs*. Shi Feike (Shen Yachuan, Beijing), who acts simultaneously as an ordinary journalist and a high-profile internet activist, represent such a type of amateur NE. His network resources were built mainly through four channels: his journalist career at 21st Century Global Report (an influential daily paper, banned in 2003) and later CCTV News Channel; his organization of LOH, an e-voluntary association; his expressive actions at BBS; and his field investigations involving some internet-public events in recent years. His associated network is mainly composed of weak ties, often lacking maintenance.

Likewise, Du Yilong (pseudonym as Bei Ming), an active organizer of Guantian offline party at Xi'an city, is nevertheless an amateur NE too. As a teacher at a middle school in Baoji city, his network seems to be bound by the spatial limitations of Xi'an. Li Jinchun, a senior analyst in a big investment bank, from his organization of a house-owner committee and subsequent protest actions and collective litigation (which is differed from the "collective action" in terms of common law), too, may be deemed as amateur network entrepreneur bound by the neighborhood network – nevertheless a no-doubtly novel relationship in the urban space. Zhu Rikun, an amateur NE of movie-and-video amateurs, belongs to this grouping, too.

Type III: *Professional NEs*. The rest of the in-depth interviewees, including Song Xianke, He Yongqin (pseudonym as Wen Kejian), Wang Yi, Hu Jia, and others Tang Hao, Su Zhenhua, Chen Yongmiao, Ben Li (pseudonym as Bei Wang) and Han Tao, are not necessarily movement entrepreneurs. They share some common characteristics: full time-deployed and strong "project identity" in fabricating NSO networks; and "rich in strong and weak ties alike, are able to fill structural holes by between others…" (Burt, 1992; Anheier, [2000] 2003). The former two are different from NEs of Type I-II, highlighting the professionalism of these NEs and then their crucial roles for the emerging professional SMOs (PSMOs). The latter, may be properly understood as the personalized network of networks.

7.2 The Making of Network Entrepreneurs: case studies

Focusing on Type-III professional network entrepreneurs, this chapter does not cover all the samples, rather, five similar activists are analysed. Four of which by and large have analogous kinds of networks, i.e. Su's close to Wen's, Chen's to Wang's, Han's to Hu's, Tang's to Song's, and the last Bei Wang is of an economist network. (See Appendix I)

Henceforth, four typical samples can be filtered out who have in common being a professional NE but varying in specific forms and trajectories of networking agitation. First of all, they are from four distinguished metropolis cities: Beijing (North China, the political economic centre of China), Guangzhou (South China, near Hong Kong, as the modern business centre), Chengdu (South-western China, a cultural city), and Hangzhou (East coastal China, with developed tourist resources). All these cities are capital cities – either national or provincial—and all more than 2000 years since the establishment but with different styles of urban life.

Amongst these, Wang Yi has been analysed in a previous chapter, showing us that the personal expressive actions could evolve to a "bridge" in networking. For the others, their specific personal transformation also displayed NSO's development in ways with highly-personalized trajectories of network growth, as follows:

1) **Hu, Jia**, has only one year's work experience in the conventional sector – at Beijing TV station after graduating in 1996. He then devoted himself into the NGO business, behaving like a fighter crossing different NGO fields and involving himself in multiple local networks of NSOs over the past few years: from HIV/AIDS NGOs to nationalist groups/NSOs to networks that are pro-redressing "June 4th" movement;
2) **Song, Xianke**, a law postgraduate from Beijing University, was involved in the organization of the first pro-democracy political party post 1989. Not surprisingly, this attempt was suppressed in 1994. After being released in 1996, he picked up his lawyer job and began to reorganize the liberal intellectual circle in Guangzhou, but resigned in 2001 and became a full-time "spider";

3) **Wen, Kejian**, a former successful business man, whose occasional commercial business looks more like a hobby, has been full-time deployed by his networking agitation, including establishing pro-democracy e-forums (BBS), joining BBS-based discussions, accepting interviews by international media, organizing local and remote offline saloons, visiting prominent liberalists and NSOs, etc.

Such personal trajectories have strongly implied "structural individualism" (Stokman and Doreian 1997: 234) mechanisms regarding the spill-over of NSO institutional innovation and NSO-based social movements. Accordingly, these highly-personalised networkingly agitations vary in specific patterns of network growth: "all-in-one" multiple networks, online/offline agitating, and snowballing networking. They eventually lead to the creation of different NSOs: professional asserting rights NSO, Internet-based NSO, and self-governed associations of liberal intellectuals.

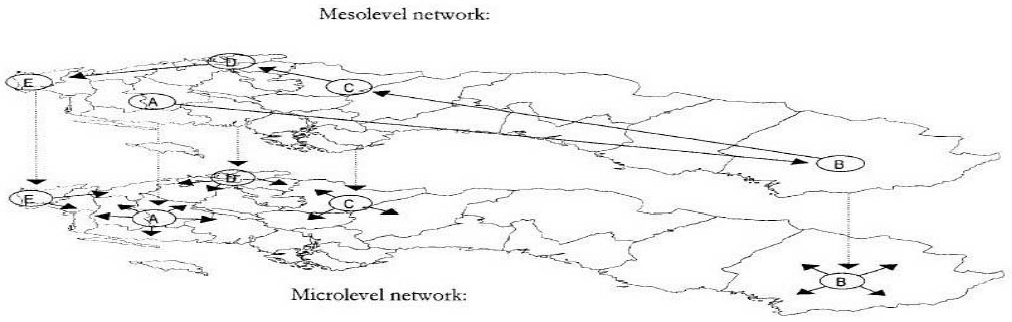
7.2.1 Wen Kejian: an agitator pushing online discussion to offline network

During the formation of offline networks, Wang Yi-like expressive NEs fabricated networks mainly in the strategic dimension, through which the identity and inter-connection of a broad-range of e-forum participants and print-media readers were evoked, shaped, channelled and ultimately, upward linked with the "thought deviance group". However, in between the higher-level NE Wang Yi and those grassroots organizers of offline parties in local cities, there existed a small number of meso-level NEs whose agitating work shortened the lead distance between each of local networks (offline saloons) as Hedström, Sandell and Stern (2000) illustrated in the case of Swedish Democratic Party (SDP).

For example, Wen Kejian, belonged to this kind of professional network entrepreneurs who frequently travelled to other cities and helped to organize local offline parties of the GT e-forum as somewhat quasi-chapters of a political party. Benefiting from his agitating actions, the GT-based offline saloons came into being and spread widely since October 2002. Specifically, Wen's agitator

NE experienced a transition along the "computer network as social network": from online agitating to offline agitating. The former is close to the "selection process", while the latter is analogous to the "contagion process" in the term Stokman and Doreian (1997: 237) defined for the evolution of social network.

Figure 7.2: A multi-level diffusion process of agitator of SDP(1889-1911)
Source: Hedström, Sandell and Stern (2000)



7.2.1.1 Online Agitating

Wen Kejian (Pseudonym), aged 34, his personal transformation toward professional agitator was rather the extension of his internet activities. As one of the earliest internet users since 1995, he began to contact BBS in 2001. Since then, e-forums were for him a "brave new world" and he became an internet activist. Internet activist has a two-fold meaning for him: establishing independent websites of pro-democracy BBS, active online communication and agitating.

From late 2001 to April 2004, he said, that he had established or sponsored eight BBS websites in total. But none of them survived longer than half year and were forced to close in the end, which cost him each time from 500 to 2000 Yuan (equivalent to about 50 to 200 Euro).

His networking agitation follows a "D" model that seems a variant of the general "P" model during the structuring of cyberprotest: Posting-Pooling-Petition, also consisting of three steps: Discover- Discuss -Develop.

According to Wen, the "Discover" means to look for those posts which may have constructive ideas but which may be easily be overlooked in BBS' everyday discussion. "Discuss" is to attract more attentions and posts around certain thesis via relay postings. And the final step is to

develop personal connections by online instant message, email and telephone till a face-to-face communication to exchange ideas directly.

Being routinized, it is not only a process of "tie-making" in an NE's day-to-day work as a part of network growth, but also a discursive process leading to the consent to some extent.[240] When the number of the above "internet acquaintances/friends" increased to a certain level, the idea of organizing an offline saloon was born and this received a very broad and positive feedback. As previously stated, Wen successfully organized the first GT (*Guan Tian Teahouse* e-forum) offline saloon on Oct. 27, 2002, only two month after he visited website of GT. Su confirmed that Wen developed more than 30 internet activists in Hangzhou city and has direct connections with most of the internet activists in present-day China.[241] The former group, largely born from that historical meeting, constituted the main body of GT-Hangzhou network, also the liberal activist network and Wen's local network. The latter have contributed to his energetic offline agitating.

7.2.1.2 Offline Agitating

Taking Wen's offline agitating as the extension of his online agitating, his offline agitating or network growth still follows the "3-D" model: Discover-Discuss-Develop. Nevertheless, to develop during the offline agitation means to organize gathering. In practice, as previously mentioned, it is these sorts of official interventions that make up the difficulties confronting local organizers/initiators when organizing offline parties. This moment, Wen's NE role makes sense in two ways: providing psychological and tactical support for when dealing with police's disturbance during preparation; and offering concrete helps in making arrangements, especially those related to choosing the venue and financial aspects.

For example, in the case of GT-Jinan offline saloon, Wen went to Jinan city after the first saloon was abolished following police intervention. Though it was not a strict "mission", along with

[240] See Gilles and Sarangi (2004), Matzat (2004), and Coleman (1990).

[241] Cf. interview with Su Zhenhua, on April 23, 2005, in Beijing.

local initiators, Wen re-organized the second gathering on August 23, 2003.[242] In May 2003, when Wen was informed that without exemption the police exerted pressures upon the local initiator in Nanchang city just before the action, Wen telephoned and encouraged other registered activists to insist. The next day, six GT "Internet friends" in total joined this mourning for Hu Yaobang, the former General Secretary of CCP and also the symbol of democracy in China, on the 14-year anniversary day of his death.

In short, Wen's agitating gives us a specific "contagion process" account of chapter-like offline saloons of GT. This specific meso-level social contagion relies heavily on Wen's personal communication and coordinating work required to make local offline saloons routinized. This relied on Wen's personal experience and entrepreneurship, which were cultivated from the blooming market economy decade of the 1990s.

7.2.2 Hu Jia: a networking fighter

Hu Jia, aged 32, represents another type of multi-stake NGO activist, who is a "professional volunteer" in environmental protection (an early member of FON), an experienced social worker in HIV/AIDS field (director of Beijing-based Aizhixing and initiator of Lovesource/Aiyuanhui), a democratic activist, and a radical nationalist in anti-Japanese actions. Structurally, Hu is simultaneously involved in at least four clusters/circles of China's NGOs and a key "local bridge" in the whole NGO network, as far as we know.

7.2.2.1 The "Critical Threshold" of Multi-networks of NSOs

Hu Jia, a multi-stake social worker or NSO entrepreneur, represents a convergence of multiple networks. Being a "professional volunteer", helping HIV/AIDS sufferers in Beijing, he also retains intensive connections with various NSOs and movement networks: helping HIV/AIDS sufferers movement and network, appealing to compensate "June 4th" victims and network, participating the

[242] Wen invited several celebrated GT-based internet activists from other cities to attend this action in Jinan city, and sought another hotel when the reserved hotel suddenly "cancelled" service under pressure.

"Defending Diaoyu Island" movement and network and environmental NGO (member of FON, Chinese Development Brief).

Though Hu's personal ties vary in the distance from each of these networks, there still emerges an ego-centred network or "critical threshold" in Ducan J. Watts' (2003: 224) terms where the ties link different sub-networks of NSOs. In real society, such ties consist of "strong ties" on the basis of closed personal connectedness and active participation.[243]

So far, an incomplete list of Hu's arrayed vectors (all with seemingly strong ties) has indicated some high-profile NEs, MEs and actors who belong to various networks: Yu Shicun and his liberal intellectual circle and redressing "6.4" movement,[244] Jiang Yanyong's high-ranking CCP cadres and redressing June 4th movement,[245] Zhou Xinting's international media and AIDS circle,[246] and Tong Zeng's nationalist Baodiao movement and network,[247] and Fu Tao's ENGO circle, etc.

Therefore, Hu's ego-network represents a more or less ironic overlap between the seemingly irrelevant movements and NSOs, e.g. the network of "defending Giaoyu Island" overlapped with networks of HIV/AIDS NGOs and redressing "June 4th" movement. What does this overlapping imply for all these different goal-oriented movements? Whether the new nationalism in China is experiencing a turning point, or technologically, whether these nationalist movements, civil rights movements, democracy movements and environment protection networks merely share common

[243] For instance, Hu participated a number of movement events as follows: several joint-letters calling for releasing Liu Di in 2003, Du Daobing in 2003, appealing for re-examining the 1989 movement in 2004; landing Diaoyu island (2003) and protesting at Japanese embassy in Beijing in December 2004; visiting HIV/AIDS sufferers' home in Henan province since 2002; rescuing Wang Yanhai in 2002; and later helping Gao Yaojie's litigation; mourning at Tian'anmen Square, etc.

[244] As Hu's partner founder of AZX, also the former chief editor of a bi-monthly influential magazine *Strategy and Management* and founder of Contemporary Chinese Institute and current vice president of Independent Chinese Pen Center (ICPC), Yu Shicun is another NE of liberalism intellectual circle in Beijing and the appealing redressing "June 4th" victims movement

[245] Jiang Yanyong, a cerebrated military surgeon who was highly praised by the international media due to his remarkable braveness during the SARS crisis in 2003 and his voice in a letter to the National People's Congress on Feb.24, 2004 calling for appealing political compensation for "6.4" victims, has close relation with Hu Jia especially in connections of Hu's recent mourning actions at Tian'anmen Square.

[246] Zhou Xinting, Beijing correspondent of American weekly *Time* also the partnership founder of AHY, was perceived to play a key role in shaping Jiang Yanyong as a SARS hero.

[247] Tong Zeng, who firstly advocated civil compensation for victims of WWII from Japanese government, is a NE in organizing such nationalist compensation movement and Baodiao movement. He is also the current president of Chinese Baodiao Union which was established in November 2004.

channels in resource mobilization and information flow, remains unclear. Does NEs' mediating role indicate an alternative mechanism of "movement spillover" in addition to mass media and other diffusion mediates as Meyer and Whittier (1994) held?

7.2.2.2 Fighting at Frontline

In addition to Hu's "tie-making" as the multi-threshold linking multiple NSOs' networks is Hu's aggressive agitation at the frontlines of various fields of NSOs. In which, particularly, Hu's political mourning of the victims of Tiananmen Square Massacre at Tiananmen Square on June 4 1990, 1999, and 2004, 2005, continuously challenged the bottom line (symbolic boundary) of the political taboo, and highlighted the pro-democracy motives running throughout all his pro-rights and nationalist networking associated actions.

In the Chinese context, the mourning *per se* has special meaning, no matter what the level of cultural tradition or practical political life or civic life in the decade of the Great Cultural Revolution or the post-Mao era. Particularly, we should keep in mind, it is the political mourning for the former GS of CCP Hu Yaobang since the day of April 16 1989 that ignited the large-scale street protests and then the pro-democracy movement that year. During the following years, the political mourning on the anniversary of important political events and distinguished liberal intellectuals or so-called "highest elites" of China, most of them died from Party's political persecution, even drew the increasing attentions of the "public space for memory in contemporary civil society" – mainly among "dissidents, university academics, bureaucrats, entrepreneurs, professionals, retired political and military elite and other types"(Mazur, 1999).

Hu linked his mourning motives with his direct involvement in the 1989 movement, and treated this political mourning as a protest action since his initial appearance.

> "Prior to knowing environmental protection or AIDS/HIV, I conducted "June 4th "-related actions since I was involved in street protesting in 1989, when I was only a middle school student.

For Hu, his first-hand experiences in the historical event are so strong that he even changed to being a vegetarian after 1989, falling into the category as Halbwachs noted in his seminal work – as a part of the collective memory of 1989, his individual memory is "made of habits and turned toward action", and "always appose to them the sense of reality inseparable from out present life." (Halbwachs, 1992: 47, 50) Regarding an aborted mourning at Tiananmen Square Massacre on April 4, the traditional mourning day that year in China, Hu explained,

> "I wanted to go to the Square, with fifteen yellow roses, and mourn before the Monument of People's Heroes at the exact time of sunrise on April 4. Fifteen yellow roses mean 15 years since the 'June 4th' Massacre, and that sunrise moment means they are to be redressed, and presenting flowers to the monument means the victims should be recognized as people's heroes…"[248]

This political mourning action was finally interrupted by the police on April 3. Hu was detained over for 53 hours and finally released after Hu protested by refusing both hunger and water whilst being detained.[249] But he went on mourning for Hu Yaobang – the former General Secretary of CCP, also the detonator of democratic movement in 1989 – at Tiananmen Square on April 15, 2004.

In this sense, Hu actually functioned as an aggressive intermediary in the reconstruction of the collective memory through his bridging role linking various groups/NGOs, and thus differed from Wang Yi's self-repairing and later collective-repairing by means of Internet and Internet-based communities (see also Halbwachs, 1992: 53). More importantly, we find, such aggressive actions contain the tie-making effects, which were verified by more episodic events and more NSOs/fields where he was involved.

[248] See the interview with Hu Jia, on May 12, 2004, in Beijing.

[249] Ibid.

For instance, in 2004, a "close friend" of Hu (in Hu's words), Jiang Yanyong, wrote to the Standing Committee of NPC calling for redressing "June 4th" victim.[250] Hu verified the close connection between Jiang and him during the interview, and also, the inter-agitating between them in the political mourning actions as previously mentioned.[251]

His involvement in nationalist NSOs can also be traced back to the transformation of his memory of 1989 and associated actions in present life. According to Hu, he turned to mourn victims of the Sino-Japan War (1937-1945) at Lugou Bridge on August 15, 1995, when the tight control made it almost impossible for mourning at Tiananmen Square. Through such continuously nationalist actions, Hu established the personal connections with other famous democratic activists, such as Bao Ge (Shanghai) and Guo Fiexiong (Beijing), who represented the leaders of the nationalist movement/NGOs/network. These nationalist activists organized a "Forum of Defending Diaoyu Islands" in late December of 2003 in Amoy, which eventually led to the first formal "Baodiao"-related NGO in mainland China – the "China Federation of Defending Diaoyu Islands" in the forum, and the first successful landing of Diaoyu island on March 24, 2004 since 1970.

In addition, in the fields of AIDS/HIV and ENGOs, Hu's early partner of Aizhixing (the first AIDS/HIV NGO in China established in 2002) – Wan Yanhai, who is among the pioneers of homosexuality research and AIDS/HIV research in China and is also a democratic activist, whose name often appeared in a number of joint-letters calling for civil rights and democracy; and Wang Lixiong, as one of four launchers of FON (the first ENGO in China established in 1994), is another close friend of Hu, who was a fugitive for almost two years after 1989 and gained international reputation from his contribution to asserting rights for Tibetan religion and other pro-

[250] Jiang Yanyong, a retired military surgeon who became a featured figure of Time as "bravest Chinese" in SARS crisis in 2003. This letter was circulated online since late February, in which Jiang disclosed the massacre evidence he witnessed. That is almost the first case which occurred within the high-ranking cadres of CCP after 1989.

[251] Supra note 245.

democracy actions since the late 1990s. They consist of a small cluster with a largely similar background, or precisely, a hidden network embedded with the collective memory of 1989.

7.2.3 Song Xianke: from survival network to NSO

Compared to Hu Jia's colourful, aggressive, and politicised network entrepreneurship over multiple networks, Song Xianke, aged 45, appears to be more moderate and localized. Over the past several years, as a professional network entrepreneur, he has transformed his private network into an officially recognized large-scale association (Guang Dong Humanistic Association, GDHA) – a rare case in legitimating NSO to a registered "social association" in present China. If using the perspective of three-level structuration (namely agents/politicization/legitimation, see also Figure 2.2) such an institutionalizing process over the past ten years can be also explained as three stages namely: friendship-based grouping, snowballing growth and legitimization.

Historically, these three stages constitute a continuously morphogenetic change of network, in particular, from Song's "survival network" of friends to a circle of local liberalist intellectuals and then to a de-radicalized NSO. Song's communicative actions or constructive agitations have penetrated through the overall process.

7.2.3.1 The Grouping of Liberal Intellectuals

"Survival" involved here is not merely a metaphor but a mirroring of his trajectory and then the network trajectory in real life. Through such survival networks which were composed of friends with similar liberal intention, he revived his personal career as a "certified attorney" and aggregated liberal intellectuals in Guangzhou city who were nearly "isolated or disappeared off from the public life in the late 1990s" (in Song's words) in the context of tightly control over research and expression.[252]

[252] Supra note 45.

The adage that any friend of yours is friend of mine is not a new one in politics. Snow and his colleagues (1980) were among the first who noted the role of friendship networks in mobilization of social movements. Astrid Hedin (2001) recently described how friends and friendship were shifted into the social network of political party (PDS) in the post-communist East Germany in her dissertation.

Likewise, GDHA is almost totally based on Song's friendship network. Song confirmed that among those early members of GDHA, numbering just over 70 members, about two thirds were his direct friends who constituted the main body of the first congress of GDHA in November, 2003.

Nevertheless, we should bear in mind, that to build up an intellectual association is nearly an impossible mission in the present-day China's environment, given the extreme restrictions on the freedom of association. Moreover, any intellectually related associations means politically sensitivity and is therefore risky. For example, in the notable case of Yang Zili and his informal "New Youth Society", all members of this small group which consisted of four young liberal intellectuals, students and engineers were accused because of their "associational actions" and "inciting to overthrow the government" and jailed for eight to ten years in 2001.[253]

Hedin's "female politics of social network" of present-day eastern Germany rests on the "interpersonal trust" and the "strength of similarity". Very surprisingly, we find rhetoric analogous to these concepts mentioned frequently in the in-depth interview with Song. He linked them with two boundaries in organizational development: the choice of organizational form between e-forum based community or conventional club-based association; and the "appropriate" scale of GDHA.

Taking interpersonal trust as a criterion, Song distinguished his friend community and e-forum-based community based on his experience as an influential internet activist and organizer of

[253] See the latest online document of China Information Centre, available at: http://www.observechina.net/info/artshow.asp?ID=42238&ad=1/23/2007.

Also, Yang was one of Song's friends.

the "offline saloon" of GT-Guangzhou. For the establishment of GDHA, the virtual community seemed hardly to promote reliable trust and translate the online communications into constructive actions. Instead, the friendship-based network was more operational and effective. So he was inclined not to over-score the potential effects of the virtual society upon real world social change.

The friendship involved here, of course, is not beyond "pursuing the similarity" as Cooley (1909) defined for friend relationship and community and as described in Johnsen's (1986) agreement model of friendship formation. But in the mid-1990's China, according to Song and other interviewees, he and many other liberal intellectuals, who still wanted to maintain an independent mind and personality fell into an identity crisis due to this disappointment, as though they were isolated from each other and from the society as a whole. Friends and friendship at that time mattered above all, as a social bond helped to fill the void left by the market economy and the authoritarian control of liberal intellectuals at the time.

However, in a manner quite different from Hedin's model, Song's friends and friendship were developed through communicative actions and networks from a weak tie ("a friend of friend"), rather than an existing friendship network. The formation of the inter-friendship between Song and his friends is the very process Song used to develop Song's personal friendship network or GDHA's network. Those communicative actions, which went towards a friendship network among Guangzhou liberal intellectuals from 1996 to 2001, such as banquets, chats, playing football, playing badminton, and so on, seemed to be simple actions that Song intended and organized; not only did they lead to a survival network for Song himself but also to a survival network for those liberal intellectuals in Guangzhou city. Then, after 2001, as we observed, their social life become "project-identity" oriented. I.e., to "assert rights" and to organize a self-governed organization that has been central to their agenda since then.

7.2.3.2 Snowballing Network Growth

In the general typology of social networks, the social circle is different from a friendship network. The social circle, according to Kadushin (1966, 1968, 1974), is integrated through social interaction rather than face-to-face contact. In visualizing, it is more likely to be a largely fragmented circle composed of the lump sum of cliques.[254] The latter, the friendship network, perhaps one of the most usual but complicated social networks, was often taken as a balanced relationship of reciprocity and transitivity according to so-called "balance theory" (Scott, 2000; Kilduff and Tsai, 2003:42). Song's contribution was to transform a nearly invisible social circle into a friendship-based network and goal-oriented association, with snowball-like network growth.

The metaphor of snowballing refers to the specific recruiting process with a "socialmetric star" as the core of network and increasing density. Different from Wen's online recruiting, Song's recruiting began with a weak tie as the starting-point of snowballing in 1996, when Song arrived in Guangzhou in 1996 without acquaintances but a friend of his friend – Zhuang Liwei.[255] Since then on, Song extended the small friendship triad to Zhuang's friends in the media and higher education fields through the above-mentioned communicative actions. Up to 2000, he built a stable friendship network and the number of "nodes" was developed to about 10 of the closest members. By late 2003, this network had integrated almost all of the influential local liberal intellectuals, such as Yuan Weishi, Lin Xianzhi, etc., more than 40 "credible" friends in total.

Here, the conversion from acquaintance to friend did not follow the old adage "the friend of friend is my friend", rather, as Song noted, it required the common identity of liberal spirit and moral qualification in social communication, which suggests a "consensus formation" (Klandermans, 1988; Gills and Sarangi, 2004). In the long run, as the above trajectory of the snowball illustrates, this leads to a self-enforced norm, as Granovetter (1985) noted, "the more frequently persons interact with one another, the stronger their sentiments of friendship for one

[254] See Alba and Moore (1983: 251), and the assembly circle diagram of Scottish companies, in Scott (1991: 150).

[255] Zhuang is currently a professor of Jinan University in Guangzhou and a part-time editor of *Nanfang Weekend*.

another are apt to be".[256] This norm, related to the collective identity of the boundary between authority and intellectual community is, no wonder, perhaps the most meaningful self-enforcing mechanism in integrating liberal intellectuals, which has revealed itself in organizational innovation and movement mobilization, as previously mentioned and will be reinforced in the remaining chapters.

7.2.3.3 Legitimization

In accordance with the threefold boundary innovations, the "snowball growth" process follows three dimensions of legitimation: goal-orientation, localization and self-limitation. They, in turn, reflect the pattern, width and depth of the network trajectory.

Firstly, after Song had largely built up his friendship network, it was his heavy dependence on the network that urged him to seek a way towards a "utilitarian" goal-oriented transformation. He sought to found a magazine on the basis of his rich social circle of media friends between 2001 and 2002.[257] However, this attempt failed in the tightened political environment prior to the 16th CCP's National Representative Conference in late 2002. In this sense, GDHA may be regarded as another but contingent by-product of his goal-orientated transformation.

In addition, one can observe a constituency-oriented de-radicalization move in Kriesi's (1996:157) typology of transformation of goal orientations and action repertories of SMOs: some key members of GDHA organized a commercial company and took over a magazine (*Citizen*) in late 2005. Within the governance structure of this magazine, GDHA is a coordinative partner of the named owner – Guangxi (province) Normal University Press, while GDHA's members have independently published this monthly magazine since the beginning of 2006.

Secondly, after the above failed attempt taught Song that university and media-related intellectuals were unable to gain sufficient legitimacy in the current social-political context, Song's

[256] See George Homans (1950: 133), recited from Mark Granovetter (1973: 1362).

[257] Wen Tiejun, a famous reformist and expert in China's rural problem, promised to help Song earlier.

survival networks began to capture more local elites and gain wider social resources in ensuing years, especially those local governmental officers or local party cadres with liberalist inclinations, regardless of whether they were standing or retired. Unlike the persuasive mechanism as Hedström, Sandell and Stern (2000) highlighted in their NE-related case studies of Swedish Social Democratic Party, Song's widening of his survival network could easily utilize the existing social networks of his intellectual friends to recruit them by identifying those who have strong liberal and reformist intentions and who wanted to participate. The institutional recognition of GDHA is founded on such a widened localized network, as previously illustrated.

Ironically, when Song, in 2003, sought to transform such a survival network into an officially recognized social association, one of the difficulties he and the network evolution were confronted with was that there were too many membership applications from those who were linked and influenced by Song's friendship network, as though it was a social flow from a social network in Sheller's sense (Sheller, 2000). The potential scale was so large that it doubled Song's friendship network and therefore increased the dangerousness for police intervention.[258] Song said that given the current political apathy in Guangzhou, the highly commercialised metropolis, it was without doubt an amazing development and well beyond expectation. But it was necessary to limit the association's scale to the friendship network with reference to the minimized number a provincial association required, pretending to be merely an intellectuals club without political goal.

Contrary to what Hedin formulated on the "strength of similarity" in the recruitment of PDS (Hedin, 2001), Song took the strength of ties (friendship) to define the boundary of network legitimisation, and this has many more practical purposes, that is, to block radicalism activists entering the association and meanwhile promote the "construction" of a rational social life rather than over criticize the authority directly, which was stressed by Song during interview.

[258] In interview, Song estimated that intended members could have been reached teens of thousands, if there were no political control over recruitment of social association.

Also, it is not only a part of Song's personal transition but also the outcome of the repeated game between Song's survival and the police's control during last eight years. Here, as a crucial factor of Song's network environment, Song recognized and emphasized, the policing policy in Guangdong province seemed quite localized with more loosed style of control than other provinces or the central government.

7.2.4 Summary: the category politics of NEs

To sum up, we may characterize the activism of NEs' networking agitation in three phases: (1) They all developed ties via fact-to-face communication and demonstrated the "strength of similarity". Then, the more emotion and time they invested, the stronger the ties that were cultivated by their face-to-face communication. At this point, it does not seem possible that Internet-based communication can replace such a face-to-face communication as a key in realizing online discussion groups into offline communities.

(2) During the network development, from Wang to Hu to Wen to Song, every NE appears to have strong intention in seeking to establish a new norm. That is the nature of Burt's "good ideas" referring to NE. Then, NE acts as a carrier of normative expectation, leading to consensus of his group and further proliferation. These norms, either Wang's "principle of voice equilibrium", or Song's "rational construction of society", or Hu's generalizing values of democracy, nationalism, and HIV/AIDS infectors, or Wen's routinizing offline saloons, not only present varying aspects of the "rational opposition consciousness", but also constitute attempts toward the rationalization of social life in the authoritarian regime which do not necessarily lead to the institutionalization of networks as such as Song's GDHA.

(3) Whilst the above (1) and (2) constitute a twofold activism of "networking agitation", in this respect, the boundaries interpenetrated by their communicative actions engaged in varying aspects thus underline NE's grassroots category politics:

- As Wen's case shows, his agitation in crossing the boundary separating the online communities and offline saloons fulfils the key loop during the formation process of e-forum-based NSOs;
- As Hu's case shows, it is the twofold structural underpinnings (the multiple networks and collective memory of the 1989 movement) that translate Hu's personal memory into individual actions of asserting rights; and it is also his aggressive agitation created increasing ties which eventually evolved to his bridge role linking multiple networks/NSOs and more asserting rights actions;
- As Song's case shows, the "strength of similarity" amongst NE's networking actions of similarity tends to take the form of friendship, and such friendship-based relationships in practice represents the high-level identity among China's liberal intellectuals. On this basis of identity and ties, the intellectuals can "snow-ballingly" integrate themselves and then self-organize. The coercive force imposed on intellectual groups can be penetrated by such groupings and the rational oppositional consciousness.

All the above have displayed NEs' capacities in influencing the flow of "Good Ideas", i.e. adding values to ties by means of innovative strategies and increasing ties (especially short-cut ties and bridges) and then the expansion and consolidation of network boundaries (see Burt 2002). From Luhmann's view, if such structuration processes have a positive result that the generation and processing of information could be going on within the same system boundary (Luhmann [1996] 2000: 19), NEs' networking agitation can thus be regarded as the an autopoietic mechanism of the self-categorization of NSOs and the category politics of NSOs.

Broadly speaking, as the preceding cases of Wang Yi and Shen Yachuan demonstrated, the actual forms of agitation should be far more plentiful than the above three types. From these networking agitations of NEs, one can therefore find further structuration leading to the asserting rights movements – the making of NE networks, the integration of NSOs and episodic protests/events.

7.3 Extension: submerged networks of NSOs

Following Diani's notion that new social movements should be seen as informal networks (Diani, [1992] 2000), this section aims to reach the core-level structuration along inter-NE relation, i.e. to seek probable "hidden networks" of NE groups in Melucci's sense on the basis of the foregoing network data. (Melucci, 1996:115)

7.3.1 The Social Network of Network Entrepreneurs

In the SNA perspective of social movements, Diani (2003) suggests two important dimensions: density and centrality. Quantitatively, the term "density" in Diani's sense means "the extent to which actors are prepared to invest scarce resources in ties among actors sharing the same identity", this seems very close to the characteristics of professional NEs represented during the tie-making process as the above cases show. Regarding "centrality", Batagelj and his colleagues (2005) remarkably note that "one of the most important uses of network analysis is the identification of 'most central' units in a network…Such units have control over the flow of information in the network."[259] In this dissertation, such units point to the probable network of NEs as the carrier of the centrality of the whole NSO network.

Therefore, by exploring the centrality of networks, a probably small but incomplete circle of internet-based NEs (not necessarily the central circle of the whole NSO sector), we may understand better the NEs as the spillover mechanism for China's NSOs and NSMs.

7.3.1.1 The Central Circle of NSO Entrepreneurs

Though the above NEs were isolated by being in distant cities and on different NSO networks on the surface, taking them as a whole, we can find from in-depth interviews a network closure linked by weak-ties. It is to be noted, besides NE's brokerage as previously demonstrated, the closure is

[259] In general, the centralization of a whole network usually includes three measurements: degree centrality, closeness centrality (Sabidussi, 1966), and betweenness centrality (Freeman, 1977), indicating the central units with shortest distances/paths to all other units (see Batageli et al., 2004). No wonder, it is more often used in referring to somewhat general situation. After the concept of Burt's "good ideas" were introduced, the quantitative centrality has been translated into a qualitative conception.

one of the typically discussed network mechanisms and social capitals in Ronald Burt's terms (cf. Burt 2002).

Theoretically, the existence of such weak-ties connected to network closure can be easily found in between their local networks. For instance, the theory of the small world developed by Travers and Milgram (1969) may be introduced and thus we may find the degrees of acquaintances among them should not be too large. The expected spill-over effect of pluralist NSO-network-based social contagion *per se* must have created a high degree of overlapping area between various networks, where most of the network nodes/members often have multiple network identities, hence the network boundaries tend to be rather implicit.

My concerns here are focused on the small circle of NEs themselves, i.e. on the horizontal links. Firstly, all of them have emerged, at times, on the name lists of joint-letters appealing for the justice for Du Daobing (2004) and appealing for the redressing of the victims in Tian'anmen Square massacre (2004).

The second, through Internet-based NSOs, we can identify a weak-tied triad: Song-Wang-Wen, who are all GT activists. Meanwhile, both Wang and Wen have the title "fellow of Cathay Institute for Public Affairs" founded by Dr. Liu Junning in Beijing in 2003. They have met at least once during Wang's address at Zhejiang University which was organized by another NE, namely Su Zhenhua (see Appendix I), at Hangzhou city in 2003. Song said he had a face-to-face discussion with Wang at Guangzhou city after a bilateral online debate in 2002, and also had a face-to-face communication with Wen at a GT offline saloon in Shanghai city in 2003.

The third, Yu Shicun, Hu's partner at AZX, is currently another associate chair of the ICPC, as previously mentioned, mediating between Hu and Wang and others. If we extend such relational analysis to the 15 in-depth interviewees, we can find all of them are inter-connected to each other by means of friendship, NSO-based actions, joint-letters, offline saloons, and formal NGOs, etc., and some of them are linked by other interviewees or common acquaintances outside those interviewed.

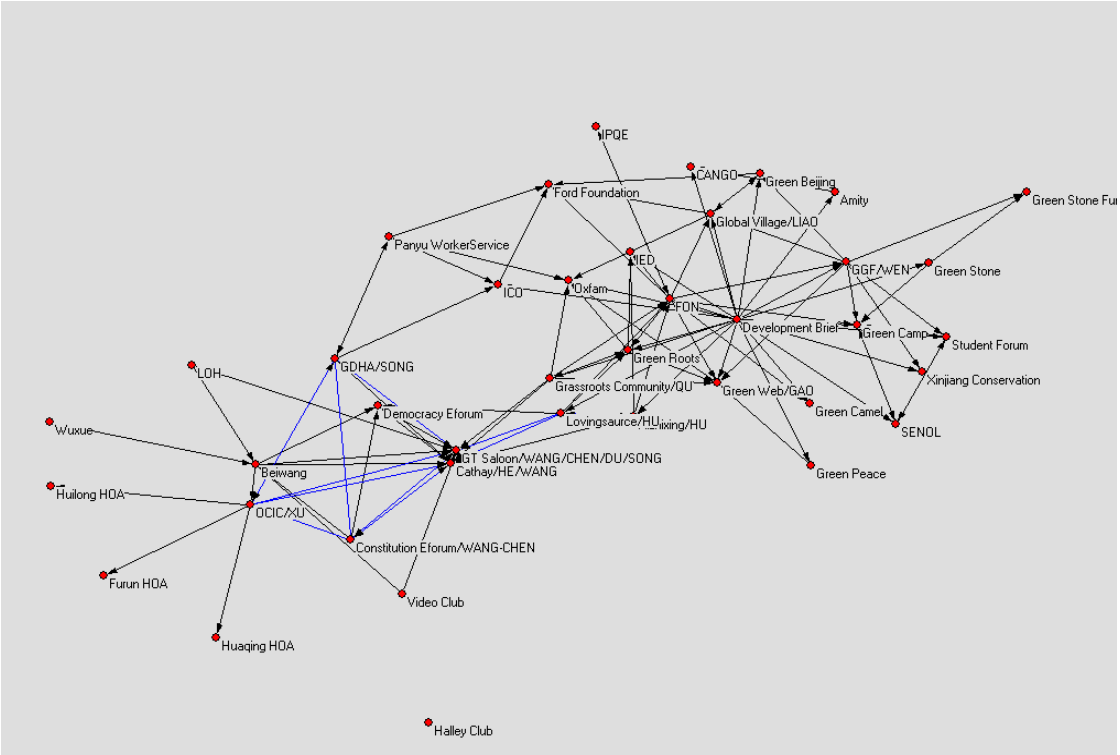


Figure 7.3: A central circle of China's NSOs.
Source: Revised from Figure 4.1.
Note: The blue lines above express personal connections among some hub-like network entrepreneurs.

Following personal confirmation in case-by-case interviews, we can say that these identified NEs are inter-linked and then constitute a network closure (see Figure 7.3). This social diagram shows us an amazing network closure of the circle of network entrepreneurs, within which most of these interpersonal linkages are simultaneously inter-organizational linkages. Though it might reflect merely a far-less complete possible social circle of NSO elites, the above network closure does link all of fifty interviewees and all types of NSOs ranged in seven large cities: Environmental NGOs, civil rights organizations, labour rights organizations, various civil voluntary organizations –

associations of liberal intellectuals, community-based householder's committees, and internet-based organizations (nationalist, pro-democracy, and philanthropic), etc.

However, we should keep in mind, as Burt holds, "Networks do not act, they are a context for action." (Burt, 2004: 354) We should not necessarily take the above "network of network" as a specific mechanism of spillover, but its closure does offer a higher structure enabling information flow and the formation of norms and consensus within the total range of NSO networks – i.e. what Burt argued "network closure as social capital" (Burt, 2002) on the grounds of information and control benefits (see Coleman, 1990, 1988; Burt, 1992: 13). Dynamically, such information flow relies heavily on the "good ideas" generated by such network entrepreneurs who have broader visions concerning the associated opportunity of structural holes – structural holes as opportunity was first developed by White (1970) and later formulated by Burt (2002).

In this sense, there are three notable influences derived from the spill-over of the circle of NSO network entrepreneurs:

1) Using their rich ties linking different NSOs, NEs' agitating actions channel the "political discourse" and guide the agenda-setting of NSMs, if we assume the "structural individualism" method during the spilling-over of each node (NEs). The above many joint letters as the expressive protests do reflect this kind of NEs' spill-over effect;

2) Since the consolidation of various movements or networks is subject to the "solidarity" between "gatekeepers" and probable "hegemonic controllers" of local networks (see Scott 1991: 147), the inter-NEs' ties as the actually "hegemonic controllers" of local networks, e.g. the following case of ICPC – an institutionalized circle of NEs, function as the consolidation of the whole NSMs and NSOs;

3) NEs' agitating actions not only lead to the networking in specific NSO and NSM fields, but also demonstrate "the extent to which actors are prepared to invest scarce resources in ties among actors sharing the same identity". To this extent, i.e. the density of networks in Diani' sense and

then the identity boundaries of networks can be roughly measured, such as Song's friendship-based agitating (or Hu's fighting in multiple fields or Wen's agitating in organizing offline saloons) suggest.

Consequently, as the elites of China's new generation of intellectuals, who were created by the new social movements or vice versa as the preceding chapter demonstrated, they acted as two types of public intellectuals in Rutten and Baud's categories: "innovators" and "movement intellectuals". I.e. they simultaneously "carve out discursive spaces and 'invent' new political discourses for emerging social movements" and "emerge in the development of social movements and include core activists and leaders." (Rutten and Baud, 2004:197) Such a flow of "good ideas" in a given network reflects that network entrepreneurs are pivotal to the "network reproduction" of social network. (Burt, 2004).

This process was labelled an "intellectual guerrilla war". Taking into account the fact that China's e-forums constitute almost the only meaningful public communication sphere, it is fair to say that internet activists of those network entrepreneurs constitute a higher circle: Wang-Wen-Song-Chen-Xu-Shen-….(see Figure 7.3), who generated and controlled the flow of constructive "good ideas".

7.3.1.2 The Finding of Semi-Strong Ties

Differing from the "loose network of loose networks" in Burt's model, such a loop, as well as bridge ties such as Hu, consists of neither strong ties nor weak ties, where a strong-tied loop may be easily taken as a political party-like group and weak ties cannot account for their intensive coordination in organizing social movements and NSOs. Rather, it is mainly linked by somewhat "semi-strong ties" between strong ties and weak ties.

The strong ties, in the sense of Granovetterian explanation, "tend to be clustered and more transitive, as are ties among those within the same clique….are less likely to be bridges"(Breiger

2003); the weak ties on the other hand, "relatively free from the tendency to transitivity, are less structured, thus enabling them the role of bridging separate cliques or sub-groups, carrying information to all the network's segments" (Granovetter, 1982:121). The so-called "strength of weak ties" here matters in providing " 'the bridges' over which innovation cross the boundaries of social groups…whereas the influence on the decision making is done mainly by the strong ties network within each group." (Weimann, 1980:21; recited from Granovetter (1982:121))

For the Internet-based communities and social networks, Watts and Dodds and Newman's Small-World experiment (2002) observed most of email users using "intermediate ties" instead of weak ties, in information transmission to acquaintances, such as occupation-and-region-related links.

In this context, from the above cases of NE's networking, the strength of the ties linking the central circle of NEs shows much stronger than the acquaintance level as is typical of weak ties, also, has apparently more strength than the "intermediate ties" above by means of the telephone (and mobile phone) connections and face-to-face communications (often in offline gathering). Through which, they function as "short-cut" bridges linking different sub-group, but substantially reverses the notion that bridges between clusters tend to be weak ties (Granovetter, 1982:120; Breiger, 2003).

On the other hand, the strength of the semi-strong ties may be weaker than their downward links within clusters – i.e. the relatively close ties or friendship-based ties cultivated by day-to-day communication over time during the formation of sub-groups or Internet-based NSOs. Still, compared with pure "intermediate ties", the actual effects of the spill-over of the "good ideas" and associated collective actions, that are mobilized through such ties/bridges crossing active structural holes as Burt (2001:235) put on the social capital of structural holes, jointly demonstrate the distinct nature and impacts of these ties.

In fact, they may fit with the widely-cited Granovetterian notion that "strong ties are more likely to be found in subgroups with higher levels of cohesion" (D. White, 2003; Moody and White, 2003) as the central circle of NE group shows – it can even be viewed an "informal coalition of NSO networks". In fact, as previously noted, Wang Yi and some other internet activists attempted to launch an "e-forum coalition" in 2003. From this point, the ties that emerge among the central circle of NEs can be defined as "semi-strong ties".

The proposed semi-strong ties share characteristics with NEs and inter-connections among NSOs (especially Internet-based NSOs) in three folds:

- Transitivity: Regarding this perhaps most important feature to differ weak and strong ties, the transitivity is that which allows NEs to create new connections and transmit "good ideas" within the circle by mediate of current ties, and has been verified by almost each NEs during the interview and it has been seen as a snowballing mechanism;
- Generator: Differed from the division of labour as the important generator of weak ties as Granovetter put (Granovetter, 1982:107), among one of the specific submerged networks of NSOs, the formation of semi-strong ties between NEs can be seen as the result of the activism of "networking agitation";
- Strength: Relative to the bridge function of those un-detectable weak ties, such semi-strong ties play a twin role in practice: While bridging different sub-networks of NSOs into a whole through a level of decision-making or leaders of local networks, such loosely-connected ties too involve these NEs to a collective decision-making circle during the mobilization of NSMs. The strength of such semi-strong ties thus only displays itself in the episodic actions or events.

7.3.2 The Submerged Networks of NSOs

Moreover, in addition to the central circle, there must be some other submerged networks (unknown yet) but complementing the whole network of NSOs. In this instance, I still concentrate on certain public events as the "network processes are series of events that create, sustain and dissolve social structures" (Doreian, 1997:3).

Icepoint Weekly & Intrainstitutional dissidents

In the early 2006, the official freezing of the "Icepoint Weekly" (冰点周刊) led to a joint-letter protest, which revealed the existence of a hidden network. It consisted of famed liberal intellectuals and high-ranking "dissidents within the Party" (namely so-called "intrainstitutional dissidents").

"Icepoint", a popular weekly of the China Youth Daily, concentrated on disclosing social problems and corruption of Party/governmental officials over a ten-year period. It was abruptly banned by the Party's Propaganda Agency in late 2005 but resumed at the end of March 2006 after a public statement co-signed by 13 famed liberal intellectuals or "intrainstitutional dissidents", which was in support of Li Datong (the chief editor of this weekly) and widely circulated via the Internet since early February of 2006, and calling for revoking the propaganda censorship institution.[260] (See also Appendix III)

Among the thirteen cosignatories, there were some famed high-ranking "intrainstitutional dissidents", like Zhu Houze (former vice-director of the Party's Propaganda Agency), Li Rui (former secretary of Mao Zedong), Jiang Ping (former rector of the University of Politics and Law of China), Dai Huang (famed journalist), and Hu Jiwei (former chief editor of People's Daily).

As their political intentions are well-known fact (see Sausmikat, 2001), this joint-letter action therefore not only indicated that the "intrainstitutional dissidents" began to participate in the asserting rights movement, but also, it provided a rare chance for outsiders to observe a submerged

[260] Online document, available at: http://www.epochtimes.com/gb/6/2/14/n1223653.htm.

network within the "intrainstitutional dissidents" and "old generation of liberal intellectuals" in a broader sense.

Through this episodic action/event, the finding of a hidden structure of NSOs since the beginning of 21st century – a central circle of NSOs and its reverse networking with those democratic activists and intellectuals in the 1980s – provides another Giddensian instantiated in action linking the new generation of NSO intellectuals and old generation of liberal intellectuals.

ICPC and central circle of NSM

The ICPC may be another institutionalized central circle, which represents the hidden structure of NSOs in this regard. Founded in 2001, the ICPC included some prominent liberal intellectuals of the 1980s (political dissidents today) and a new generation of liberal intellectuals who arose from NGOs, NSMs and the Internet as a distinguished "hidden network" converging on a new generation of young liberal intellectuals, political dissidents who represented the movement elites in the 1980s, and ENGO-activists, appearing as an incomplete central circle of the NSOs and NSMs.

Within such submerged network of NSOs, we can identify a number of famed NSO activists who were involved in the 1989 democracy movement and then pioneered NSOs and NSMs from the mid-1990s to date. For example, Liang Xiaoyan, who was forced to leave Beijing Foreign Language College after 1989 and co-launched FON in 1994, is known to the public in recent years through her involvement in the "country education movement" since 2002; Likewise, Pu Zhiqiang, a famous human rights lawyer in Beijing, was just one of the early leaders of the student movement of Beijing University in 1989; and Qin Gen, the early organizer of the GT offline saloon in Shanghai. For them, NGOs or NSOs or asserting rights organizations appear more like a provisional shelter or a new political space in a roundabout way, heading to democracy.

SEE and submerged network of private entrepreneurs

Besides, Yang Peng, a former director of a Kunming-based ENGO in the 1990s and currently an official of the National Environment Bureau, aged about 44, indicates another emerging unrevealed

network in addition to NSOs and 1980's liberal intellectuals – private entrepreneurs are involving NSOs' network in a distinguished way. This development thus supports Heberer's (2003) holding that private entrepreneurs in China became an emerging strategic group within China's authoritarian political system.

That is a networking around Alashan Ecological Association (SEE), which was launched by Yang and two other private entrepreneurs (Hu Cunbao and Song Jun) in February 2005 and registered as a local social association in June 2005. As the latest outcome of the network affiliation between NSOs and private entrepreneurs mediated by Yang, we can find threefold innovative features of this NSO/network:

- Within less than one year, SEE's network rapidly expanded to 100 private entrepreneurs in nation wide, whilst raising 10 million Yuan(each member one hundred thousand) and released 3 million Yuan of grants for nation-wide ecological projects. Surprisingly, the respondents from SEE denied the probable political risk of unlimited recruiting and even showed strong intentions to develop through official-sponsored industrial/business associations.[261]

- As a specific practice of "asserting rights", SEE advocated social responsibility of enterprises, promoted local democracy in Alashan area during their ecological project, and developed a democratic governance structure of organization.[262]

- SEE created a rare kind of governance structure relative to other NSOs, consisting of three parts: that of volunteering part (recruited from ENGOs), foundation management (currently charged by Yang Ping, the former chief editor of a dissolved liberalist magazine – *Zhanlue yu Guanli* (Strategy and Management)), and a club of private entrepreneurs (inclusive annually-elected board).

[261] See interview with Hu Baosen, the president of board of Jianye Group and president of SEE, on Feb.28, 2006 in Beijing.

[262] See interview with Yang Peng, on Feb.28, 2006 in Beijing. Yang and other repondents confirmed a democratic election and management institution inside SEE had been established within half a year in a way of "continuous quarrel". They said that meant a definitely collective choice to say good-bye to Lennist "centralism" within the boundary of SEE.

Hence, the SEE reaches and overlaps different sub-networks (active liberal intellectuals, private entrepreneurs and NGOs), from which arises the authorities strict surveillance over this growing "submerged network".[263]

Summary: Though the above cases and social diagrams appear to be descriptive and very incomplete, the perspective of SNA with a focus on network entrepreneurs still provides us with evidence of diffused structuration processes that occurred within "internal structure" of NSOs.

In most instances, network entrepreneurs are those who are expected to create "good ideas", with their spider-like networking relying heavily on the process of the diffusing of "good ideas" – the information flow across NSO network, from e-forums to mainstream media.

Among the above "structural individualism" networking processes, the "strength of semi-strong ties" is highlighted in boundary-spanning and network-spanning. The networking as previous cases show, has a relatively high density of ties. Meanwhile, the structural holes in the inter-network levels which contain opportunities or novelties (Burt, 1992) generated NE groups, novel meaning-constituted boundaries in social differentiation, and submerged networks.

Such meso-level development is perhaps the most telling point in the evolution of NSO-related social networks, while the detached identity of citizenship is forming amongst the NSOs and the masses. Only through those based on such strongly-connected ties can the whole NSO sector really make sense as the social mediate of China's society.

[263] Ibid.

Chapter 8

CONCLUSIONS

The late authoritarianism in China

> "…there is no transition whose beginning is not the consequence—direct or indirect—of important divisions within the authoritarian regime itself."
>
> -- G. O'Donnell and P.C. Schmitter (1986:19)

In the preceding chapters, we have charted the development of China's NSOs after 1989, outlined the institutional, organizational and social innovations of NSOs relative to conventional SOs, and addressed NSO-related "asserting rights movements" and the emerging new generation of NSO/movement liberal intellectuals. In particular, the Internet communication and NSO/network entrepreneurs functioned as key spill-over mechanisms during the generation and consolidation of e-forum-based NSOs, new social movements, and NSO networks. They represent the transformation process around the NSO-affiliated institution-structure in varying aspects along the line from organization to network to actors. This chapter seeks to summarize foregoing discussions and draw out theoretical conclusions around the origin, nature and prospect of China's NSOs.

8.1 A Summary of NSOs' Structural Politics

Back to the question, "what is politics?", Lasswell's tradition concentrates on the distributional aspect of political life that "who gets what, when and how". But, it fails to account the widely-existing "non-distributive" actions in the political world. During the last fifty years, both the discipline of political science and the practice of political reality have experienced a development to fill this gap, especially the rise of (new) social movement theory. Today, in general, "'politics' might best be characterized as the constrained use of social power." (Goodin and Klingman, 1998:7)

The above structural transformation and affiliated contentious politics of NSOs, too, have largely shown a similar change. In the past 15 years, this development seemingly went beyond the

conventional mainstream elite politics as Fewsmith (2001a) outlined which was characterized as the Party/state-centred distribution of political power, such as the 1980's pro-democracy movements which were coined deeply with abstract democratic values and thus confined to the category of distributional politics of political power. Rather, by concentrating on the specific citizenship, China's NSOs have created a new category of social politics, and meanwhile re-structured the state-society relationship – i.e. changed the "state-led society" the authoritarian politics had tightly controlled and heavily relied on. As NSOs' structuration in the multiple levels indicates, they are re-organizing their institutions and building their networks and lives, to be a new social power in opposition to the Party/state's coercive control of the society.

Just from this point, thanks to the NSOs' movement and networking, the emerging contentious politics in the urban China may be properly termed "late authoritarian politics". Analogous to Ernst Mandel's "Late Capitalism", this "late authoritarianism (politics)" in present-day China, is characterized by a "structural transformation" of the authoritarian mode of state-society relation. It can thus be defined as an authoritarian regime (polity) with an internal transformation of institution-structure where an independent social force has changed its essence from inside (the societal) although the extra-institutional structure under authoritarian control appears to remain in the long run.[264]

This concept accommodates three specific conclusions of NSOs' structural politics, as both the processes and outcomes of NSOs' structuration: the resilient authoritarian control system as the environment of NSOs, changed contentious politics of NSOs, and the anti-authoritarian autopoiesis of NSOs' structure.

[264] The Algeria's transition seems alike to the situation in China. William B. Quandt in his *Between Ballots and Bullets: Algeria's Transition from Authoritarianism* noted, "In fact, the authoritarian structure may last a long time. But they no longer have "hegemony" in Gramsci's sense. The authoritarian regime cannot count on passivity or acquiescence. There is contestation. In this sense we can speak of post-or-late authoritarianism." (Quandt, 1998: 173, note 1)

8.1.1 The Resilient Authoritarianism

Paralleling the emerging "rational opposition consciousness" among NSO activists and new social movements aiming to assert citizenship within the framework of the "rule of law", the launch *per se* of the new corporatism in China since the late 1990s might signal that the ruling authoritarianism was in changing and kept resilient in some extent. Moreover, such a resilience occurring in the authoritarian Party/state provides an evidence of the interpenetration of NSOs' structuration.

Gunter Schubert (2005) recently makes an overview of the debates around "reforming authoritarianism", which was launched by Pan Wei's (1999, 2001, 2003) proposal of "consultative rule of law"[265] and was supported by in the studies about the transformation of China's social organizations (e.g. Kang, 1997, 1999a; Wang, 1999; Wang et al., 2004a). They proposed a state-centred "societal plurality" to reflect NGOs' "social intermediating role" between the Party/state and the society. In their view, the NGOs or social organizations are not deemed as the society ontologically.[266]

Albeit, regardless of the problem that how long this consultative rule of law will probably be maintained, as Schubert notes, more scholars are inclined to hold the view that the "Chinese regime is still a party-state, in which the Party penetrates all other institutions and makes policy for all realms of action (Nathan, 2003:13). Analogous to Trotsky's argument against "the purely mechanical conception of capitalist breakdown", Nathan's observation may reflect the real situation in present-day China, where the "pragmatic regime" has maintained "authoritarian resilience" for a long time without "triggering a transition to democracy" (Nathan, 2003: 16).[267]

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[265] See Pan Wei (1999, 2001, 2003), and Wu Qiang (2001).

[266] Cf. Kang (1999b). Such a corporatism argument can also be found in the official policy of the Ministry of Civil Affairs. Confronted the pressure of new social movements, there was a report that reformists in Civil Affair Ministry were drafting new regulation for looser control of SOs, and a limited number of NSOs too participated this drafting. (See interview with Jia Xijin, the vice director of NGO Centre of Tsing Hua University, on April 8, 2004, at Tsing Hua University, Beijing.)

[267] Cf. Paul Mattick (1972). See also the symposium organized by the *Journal of Democracy*, namely "China's Changing of the Guard", collected in the *Journal of Democracy*, Vol.14, No.1, 2003.

However, compared with the preceding restrictive control over social organizations, such a policy change favouring "good governance" of and by intermediary social organizations might reflect the tradeoff confronting China's authority in instrumentally utilizing social organizations to improve the state-instituted governance – close to Schmitter's (1974) "state corporatism".

Though the authoritarian polity as an exogenous variable has not been examined thoroughly in this study, the paradoxical dilemma of authoritarian governance has been sketched in previous chapters. In practice, the "praetorian public sphere" (Linch, 1999) is controlled by a complex of repressive-regulative but lowly-institutionalized institutions according to the specific boundaries of civil rights. The authoritarian control as a whole still remains resilient whilst the statute of law has increasingly expanded to guarantee civil rights and human rights. Frankly speaking, though these are largely a part of the political promise of the Party to enforce "rule by law", to maintain their waning legitimacy, they have been utilized by NSOs and then translated to the normative resource for NSOs in gaining more political opportunity and mobilizing NSMs. Hence, vis-à-vis the NSOs' re-interpenetration and re-definition through NSOs' category politics, the governmental policy "promoting social-intermediary organizations" which was launched in the mid-1990s (see Shi, 2000), suggests a dimensional shift from the vertical level – the social control of social organizations – to the horizontal level of the self restraining of the state.

In this context, the very limited change occurring within the governance of social organizations in recent years, appears to be a selective response to NSOs' movements on the vertical level. The governmental agencies have more choices than ever, which are characterized and sheltered by the lowly-institutionalized environment, such as the "*de facto* recognition" given to NSOs in practice instead of the discrete application of narrowly stipulated "laws and regulations (*Falü & Fagui*)" as the FLG's case shows (Keith and Lin, 2003:641), and thus they behave more pragmatically and elastically when they confronting with the NSOs as an increasing social force.

First of all, confronted with increasing NSOs, there emerged a diversification between the different governmental agencies at the horizontal level – particularly, between governmental "*de facto* recognition" and "legal recognition" or "day-to-day control" of NSOs. In fact, almost all formal NGOs involved in this study reported they were "recognized" or "treated" as NGOs by those SO watchdogs (mainly "Civil Affair" or Tax agencies, or "Administration of Industry and Commerce"). The de-institutionalized "platformalization" of NSOs even developed and routinized the negotiating channels or cooperative relationships with local governments, as Saich (2000) observed and Tong (2005: 182) reported, hence it spilled over the de-institutionalization effects into the governance institutions.

This divergence between different governmental agencies not only comprised certain spaces for NSOs, it also, eventually led to a number of social events and collective actions of NSO-related new social movements, e.g. the online protests in support of Du Daobing. It should be noted that, Wang Yi and other network entrepreneurs utilized and transformed these events and protests into increasingly social resources as previously illustrated.

Secondly, even within police control, we can find a contradictory divergence. On the one hand, increasing regulations that aim to enhance the control system, police violence and informational technology have been enacted under the banner of "rule by law" in recent years. In practice, the police maintain tight surveillance over almost all interviewed NSOs. The responders confirmed, that their concerns focused on political intentions of concrete NSOs and persons, as the cases of Nie Hailiang's Huilongguan House-Owner Association and Hu Jia's multi-threshold among AIDS/HIV-nationalist-pro-democracy networks show.

On the other hand, the police' day-to-day surveillance of NSOs appears more pragmatic and their targeting seems confined to human rights activists, large-scale assemblies and e-forums, as the preceding cases show. By the end of 2005, there were few reports of the police directly raiding

NSOs, despite earlier suppression over CDU and Falun Gong. China's NSOs as a whole seemed to have gained a relatively independent space without too much interruption from the police.

However, this does not necessarily suggest that the corporatism relation of "negotiating with the government" would have spilled over to the policing domain and that there had been substantial change in the restrictive policing of NSOs. For most of interviewed NSO workers who reported being monitored or suffered intervention by the police, it is hard to find any evidence that police agencies had attempted to directly communicate with NSOs during their continuous surveillance, although either Song or other NSO workers did show the intention to build direct negotiation relations.[268]

The above situations highlight the resilience of authoritarianism, and suggest that structuration could be a substitute for the institutionalisation of those NSOs under certain conditions. That was perhaps the main fear of the Chinese authorities in the case of FLG, and was also reflected in Kang's (1999b) studies of FLG. The most telling event occurred just after China's authorities suppressed FLG and then tightened the spaces of institutionalisation available to grassroots social associations. Since that turning point, we have noticed that, China's NSOs have chosen the way to deepened structuration, which eventually led to the re-politicization of NSOs (i.e. the asserting rights movements) in the following years.

Therefore, to a large extent, the rise of NSOs' structural politics still follows Lowi's notion "policy makes politics" (1964) and thus can be viewed the result of the authoritarian policy of "state-led society". Meanwhile, the above divergence occurring within the authoritarian regime can also be regarded as a reflection of the social differentiation deepened by NSOs and NSMs, or more precisely, as the result of the inter-penetration of NSOs' structuration along specific institutional and social boundaries over the past 15 years.

[268] See note 45, interview with Song. Other deep interviews with Fu Tao, Gao Tian, etc., too verified similar situation they confronted and their intention in building inter-trust or negotiation with government. Fu and Gao's organizations were not registered or officially recognized.(China Development Brief and Green Web)

If according to Larry Diamond's (2006) two-dimension proposal to build the rule of law in China by means of enhancing horizontal and vertical accountabilities of the governments, the limited changes within the governance of social organizations in the horizontal and vertical levels will not achieve "a truly vigorous rule of law, and bridge the widening chasm between people and ruling elite, unless it also develops, however gradually, democracy" (Diamond, 2006: 90).[269]

8.1.2 New Contentious Politics of NSOs

In Chapter 6, I roughly outline a landscape of the new contentious politics – how the rise of NSOs and associated "asserting rights movements" (NSMs) attempted to redefine the concrete boundaries of civil rights, social rights and political rights. Though most of them are confined to symbolic actions, the new contentious politics highlights a structural challenge that the Party-state's authoritarian regime has not encountered since 1949. Particularly, it has developed two distinctive features and thus differentiates it from 1989's democratic movement.

An intermediate domain

The first, differed from the pro-democracy movements in the 1980s which were criticized for still being subject to Confucian ethics and lacking modern conceptions like constitutional politics, civil society, and so on, the NSOs have been successful in launching a new social movement in pursuit of concrete citizenship. A new category of social politics henceforth totally replaces the party politics which was pursued by the democratic movement in 1989.

As Figure 6.2 shows, various "asserting rights NSOs" engage in the fields of civil rights, social rights, and ecological rights, thus redefine specific boundaries of citizenship and re-structure the contentious politics in present-day China through their "asserting rights" actions and movements (i.e. Giddensian structuration of allocation, sanctions, and moral/ecological structures). On the level of social cognition, such "constructive resistance (i.e. moderate oppositional consciousness)"

[269] See also Guillermo O'Donnell (1998).

constitutes the "expectation structure" of NSOs' constituency – a specific social structure cognitively based on individuals.

According to Luhmann, paralleling existing social structures from which the NSOs stem, the formation of social expectation rests on congregated individual claims, and structural transformation occurs when the "difference between normative expectation and cognitive expectation is established, a peculiar intermediate domain emerges" (Luhmann, [1984] 1995: 324, 326). Then, after NSOs established the difference between rights-centred social expectation and the authoritarianism norms, an intermediate domain of NSOs emerges which comprises the political opportunity and social space for NSOs. Dynamically, the rights-centred social expectation and NSOs' asserting rights movements concentrate on two categories of contentions:

1) In the broadest sense, by virtue of the social cognition of "asserting rights" as the carrier, those large-scale but highly-dispersed occasional street protests and collective petitions of "rightful resistance" in Chinese cities can be integrated into NSO-centred asserting rights movements or "network movement" (Castells, [1997] 2004:156) as a part of so-called "urban movements" in Castells' terms (Castells, 1983, 2004).[270]

Underpinned by such a social cognitive bond, any concrete rightful resistance can thus be transformed to an episodic event or campaign via NSO's intervening, as the event of Sun Zhigang's death shows. Taking into account the increasing "collective events (i.e. large-scale resistance actions)" in official rhetoric, the category politics comprise almost unlimited possibilities for the episodic transformation.

Even inside the NSO sector, the "asserting rights"-oriented politicization has terminated the de-politicization of formal NGOs and determines the agenda-setting of social organizations after 2003. As we find in this study, the depoliticised ENGOs were involved in this context to reform

[270] Supra note 66. In 2004, the officially documented collective protests nation-wide in the urban and rural areas soared to about 74,000.

ENGOs into an environmental movement, and the form of the "asserting rights movement" has been spilled over to almost all NSOs regardless of whether they are formal organizations. The whole NSO sector hence becomes the subjectivity of the new category of social politics.

2) Thanks to the widespread use of the Internet after 1998, various NSOs and associated NSO networks including formal NGOs, asserting rights NSOs, e-civic associations, offline communities, and a new generation of public/liberal intellectuals, there emerged a broadest political community around the PSMOs of new social movements. The Internet here makes sense in two folds:

- The first, while the increasing Internet communication has shaped the Internet as a public sphere in China's social life, NSOs' use of Internet transforms it to a domain of NSOs' social politics where a new detached identity of citizenship locates the centre and thus differentiates it from the conventionally embedded identities based on *Unit System* and *Guanxi* in urban China.
- The second, the Internet and e-forum-based NSOs significantly enrich the differentiation within the NSO network and thus transform their hierarchical network into a heterarchical network with a "segmented, reticular, and multi-faceted structure" in Melucci's (1989) sense. Particularly, a new central network and a submerged network of the NSO entrepreneurs and the anti-authoritarian activists respectively have come into form.

From the above systematic differentiation emerged from the widespread ICTs since 1998 onward, we can understand a broadened grassroots and deepened complexity within China's NSOs during their interaction with the authoritarian system in the Internet era. Through which, the absent solidarity between the elites (mainly students and intellectuals) and the masses present in the 1989's democracy movements as McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly (2001) pointed out has been constructing by these NSOs and NSO networks. Hence, though NSO-related contentious politics may be still regarded as a kind of intellectual politics (in the perspective of movement intellectuals), it has gone

far beyond the conventional intellectual politics in the sense of "elite politics" as Fewsmith (2001a) holds.

New forms of contentious politics

On the other hand, by means of social movements, the NSOs as SMOs have structurally reshaped the mobilization basis of contentious politics in urban China. Put briefly:

1) Beyond the contested form of "indirection and irony" in the 1990s as Thornton (2002) insisted and the poorly organized "rightful resistance" observed by O'Brien (1996), the twin activism of NSOs' movements – the dual action of online protest and networking agitation used in movements of NSOs has greatly expanded the contesting forms of legal campaigns, and politicized various ordinary forms of social life, like online posting, joint letter, investigation, litigation, saloon, Internet-based communication and face-to-face communication, and so like. They constitute the micro basis and habitualized process of the structuration of NSOs.

2) Dynamically, the non-institutionalized NSOs' contentious politics or "asserting rights movements" depend on episodic events, as the above numerous events illustrated. For the whole structuration processes of NSOs, events as a basic episodic unit involve situated and relational practice in concrete time-space and then transform to the actions/campaigns, thus link the structural change and process. Such an event approach has proved its effectiveness for the use of characterizing the non-institutionalized movements and episodic transformation. Even in the latest NSO's campaigns in support of Gao Zhisheng and Chen Guangcheng in 2006, the suppressive actions conducted upon individual NSO activists could eventually transform the NSMs as a societal self-protection movement into a self-protection movement of the NSO sector.

In short, during the making of a new generation of young intellectuals and moderate opposition consciousness, e-forum-based online discourse, various "asserting rights" movements and poly-centred social networks of NSOs in the broadest sense, China's NSOs have socially constructed

their social position, grassroots support and the category of social politics in a changing society. That is the endogenous social basis of China's NSOs, also perhaps the most important aspect of the social transformation in urban China which is still going on with an open end.

8.1.3 The Anti-authoritarian Autopoiesis

By far, the above discussions are largely bound by the paradigm of state centralism. From this state-society perspective, it is still hard to say that the authoritarian regime is encountering a structural crisis, for instance, the "legitimation crisis" as Habermas ([1973],1975) launched or the "overall social crisis" of the "Late Capitalism" in Mandel's terms ([1972], 1978). Despite the resilience and pragmatism of authoritarian control, new contentious politics in this context appears to be, at most, a plausible and contingent constraint of coercive power.

As Bentivegna holds, to understand the structural meaning of "ICTs politics", "one should also add the suggestions offered by Giddens (1991) and Beck (1997), who speak of 'life-politics' and 'sub-politics', respectively, to account for the materialization of politics in different ambits and contexts, thus meaning the loss of 'centre' as a consequence of the crumbling of the traditional political institutions that previously had control of it" (Bentivegna, 2006:332).

It may reflect the dualist category between lifeworld and system, as well as "Habermas' ([1984] 1988) division of lifeworld and system is among the latest in the long series of binary oppositions used to characterize modern social life: *gemeinschaft* and *gesellschaft*, mechanical and organic, folk and urban, status and contract, traditional and modern." (Calhoun, 1991:97) For NSOs' contentious politics, these specific categorical boundaries represent the mechanisms of new category politics and new reproduction relation between the state and society.

From the effects of NSOs' structuration, why NSOs matter for the "late authoritarianism" or how NSOs essentially change the nature of the authoritarian state-led society is first of all raised

from Linz and Stepan's notion about the ideal type of authoritarianism that "a particular authoritarian regime in its late stages might have a robust civil society" (Linz and Stepan, 1996: 55).

When we recognize that NSOs have being stemmed from the lifeworld and both NSOs and the lifeworld can be seen as a system vis-à-vis the Party/state system, the self-referential structuration of NSOs then indicates an autopoietic movement of NSOs, from the state-led society to constructing a civil society. Such a self-referential shift is analogous to what Mandel's "crisis of capitalist relation of production" refers to as his "late capitalism".

The repoliticization processes of NSOs underpinned by the twin activism of NSOs' movements – the habitualized-online-posting-based cyberprotest and networking agitation – have shown us the emergence of an autopoietic system of the social politics within urban China's authoritarian system.

The NSOs-associated structuration helped NSOs reconstruct a four-part connection with their predecessors in the 1980s (i.e. those-pro-democracy intellectual organizations), which was almost totally cut down by the authoritarian regime and remained so for over ten years, but was rebuilt via the repairing of collective memory, new generation of young liberal intellectuals, "asserting rights" movements and the increasing NSOs *per se*. Structurally, the NSO-organized sector therefore seems to fall into Peter Birle's (2000) category of "anti-authoritarian civil society".

However, what makes the four-part repoliticization to be an "anti-authoritarian civil society" can be attributed to a key mechanism – the spread of the Internet and its structuration effects. As early studies shows, we can observe that the Internet is involved in almost all the communication-action of NSO's marginal innovations and the deepening structuration after 1998. Precisely, since the Internet plays as a vital modality and forms a relatively independent sphere enabling public discourse and resource mobilization, it permeates different social-institutional domains and then creates new spaces/opportunities for NSOs. For instance the formation of "virtual communities" and then the transformation to offline association, the formation of e-civic association, the online

petitions or protests, the organization of smart-mob street protests, and the formation of identity of NSOs and NSMs.

In this context, the Internet communication as a key modality of structuration involves a threefold self-reproduction and self-organization, marking an "autopoietic movement" in the evolutionary processes of China's NSOs: networks, boundaries and re-production. [271] Correspondingly, the three autopoietic elements are comprised in the three-level structuration of NSOs. (See Figure 2.1, 2.2)

Networks

Firstly, from the original sense of autopoietic system launched by Maturana that such systems constitute a "network of productions of components that recursively constitute their interactions, generate and realize the network that produces them and constitute, in the space in which they exist, the boundaries of the network as components that participate in the realization of the network,"[272] the processes of formation for NSO networks as previously demonstrated, fully coincide with these criteria.

Over the past decade and a half, early analysis has verified that by means of the Internet the formal networks of NSOs emerged during NSO's organizational transformation towards professionalization and platformalization, in which the flow of information, funds, and social workers was effectively distributed and eventually formed a self-identity and a self-produced space of the NSOs.

In the transition from online discussion groups to offline communities and further network growth, we find the widespread existence of "semi-strong ties" which are developed by network entrepreneurs of NSOs. Though on the surface they seem very close to the "strong ties" formed by

[271] Though Maturana strictly distinguishes his concept of autopoiesis from the social autopoiesis used by Luhmann, his definition of autopoiesis containing the three elements is still applicable for this research, that is, "autopiesis refers to a molecular network of the production of moleculars that through their interactions produce that very network and create its boundary".(Mataruna and Poerksen, 2007:69).

[272] See Maturana (1981:21), recited from Eva M. Knodt (1995: XX).

traditional *Guanxi* as Bian (2002) argued, these have replaced *Guanxi* to a large degree within the NSO sector/network and during NSO's expansion, if we take into account the finding that they originate from the Internet-based communication and discourse.

More significantly, differed from Granovetter's notions of "strength of weak ties" verified by labour-markets-related studies and structural hole-related studies and recent World Wide Web-based social networks studies, it appears a novel social force in present-day China stemmed form the "structural holes" in Burt's sense. Therefore, it is perhaps a key modality during the evolution of "computer network as social network" (Wellman et al., 1996), among most important micro-sociological underpinnings of the autopoietic society.

Boundaries

Secondly, the networking processes not only matter for the social grouping of NSOs and the forming of new social movements, but also, they construct and consolidate the boundaries differentiating the NSO sector from the state-led society and then gain the autonomy of the whole NSOs to some extent.

According to Luhmann, the autonomy is indispensable for gaining distance, and the social systems are autopoietic systems that select themselves and their boundaries (Luhmann, [1984] 1995: 415). Also, the formation of the boundaries interrupts the dual continuity of processes that connect system with its environments (ibid: 30). "Using boundaries, systems can open and close at the same time, separating internal interdependencies from system/environment interdependencies and relating both to each other" (ibid: 29). That is to say, boundaries are thus an evolutionary achievement par excellence for differentiating the system from the environment towards autonomy.

In practice, such a process of differentiation is comprised of two parts: the external differentiation and internal differentiation. On the one hand, the external differentiation is necessary for the system formation (ibid: 192). NSO's network-connected ties re-define the dual boundaries between citizens and state, voluntary associations and the Party/state; the institutional

and social innovations highlight the category of NSOs in differentiating from the mainstream SOs – the state-led society. That is the self-categorization process in Turner et al.'s (1987) meaning, also the early resource mobilizing process of NSOs, which blurs the boundaries between membership and involvement. Through which, we can not only measure the extent "to which a group depends on particular individuals to retain its character as a group" (Moddy and White, 2003:107), but also, we can identify the relational dimension of social solidarity and the diffused social influence of NSOs.

Only in this instance of external differentiation – we have discussed as the external structuration which is reflected on the trajectory of the social grouping aspect of NSOs' legitimisation and institutionalisation. – does it partly support the mainstream (new) corporatism hypothesis in the context of a late authoritarian state but presupposes that the network as the link with the internal system should be the pre-condition of the corporatism, for "Corporatism never eliminates or replaces a comprehensive network of voluntary associations" (Cohen and Arato, 1992: 433).

On the other hand, the above external differentiation around the external boundaries induces the internal differentiation, by internal differentiation the external boundaries are "enlisted and thereby reinforced" (Luhmann, [1984] 1995:193). The internal differentiation of NSOs, which began to be deepened since in 1998, has achieved surprising results of structuration. The Internet-based communications have constructed three-layer "meaning-constituted boundaries": the shared "asserting rights"-oriented "rational opposite consciousness", shared collective memory of 1989s democratic movement, and a new generation of young public intellectuals. Without the spread of the Internet and online discussion groups, it is impossible for us to imagine the formation and expansion of such anti-authoritarianism social consciousness within such a short time.

Consequently, NSOs' boundaries are "self-generated" (Luhmann, [1984] 1995:197) on behalf the autonomy of NSOs. A self-categorized political community thus emerges, comprised of

activists and participants of various NSOs, including formal NGOs, asserting rights NSOs, e-civic associations, e-forum-based and offline communities, and many more citizens who have been involved in the above NSOs and NSO networks.

Reproduction

According to Luhmann, the formation of reproduction is among the basic changes in the transition from self-organization to autopoiesis (Luhmann [1984] 1995:36). Being self-referential and autopoietic on the level of its elements (communication and action), reproduction means both communication and action – the system as the communicative system and action system – "must constantly cooperate in order to enable reproduction out of the elements of reproduction" (Luhmann, [1984] 1995:169).

In the above evolutionary processes of NSOs' structuration, there are two elements which are fostered from the Internet-based communication and asserting rights actions but cooperate and reproduce the expressive actions/events in constantly Internet-based communications, the day-to-day networking and episodic events of asserting rights movements: the twin activisms of online protesting and networking agitation.

When these micro activisms become habitualized over time, i.e. embedded into every day life or behavior, the political community of NSOs as an autopoietic system goes on and enforces itself in the episodic events. The constituencies organize their institutions and build rational social life, representing the new power as Castells explains the social movements in the informational age (Castells, [1997] 2004: 425).

Online protesting, based on the habitualized posting behaviour in e-forum discussions, tends to generalize the meaning of actions and integrate the solitary individuals into shared ones – i.e. to cultivate the oppositional culture of the ordinary activists and participants. In the past decade, such an oppositional culture has developed various forms of contentions, from online protest to the

joint letter, litigation, investigation, and expanded the NSO's networks towards a political community.

On the other hand, it is the activism of networking agitation of NSOs' network entrepreneurs, who mobilize the movement through their weaving networks, that fulfil active "structural holes" and then create the "centred interdependencies" of NSOs. Different from the dependence of formal NGOs on outside sponsorship, it is instead an endogenous consolidation of the structure (see also Luhmann [1984] 1995:284). The latest self-organization of formal NSOs, e.g. SEE, GDHA, and ICPC, may be thus understood as a result of this consolidating activism. They are an institutionalised networking of different groups, generations and submerged networks.

Therefore, focusing on the morphological transformation of NSOs from ENGOs to Internet-based NSOs to "asserting rights NSOs", we can outline two additional paralleling lines that penetrate through and correspond to three-stage structuration processes (see Figure 2.2, 8.1):

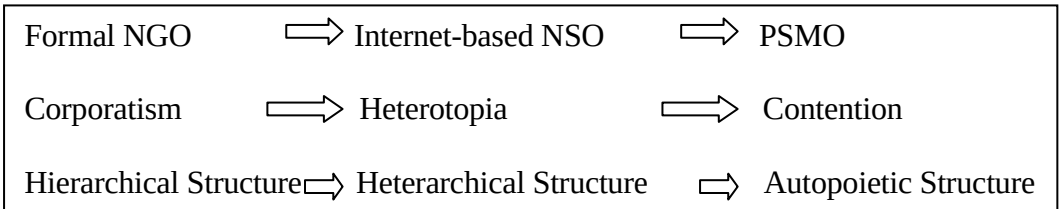

Figure 8.1: The structuration lines of NSOs

The total structuration processes of NSOs are thus framed by these three lines advancing toward an autopoiethetically structured politics of NSOs. Here, the corporatism account may partly explain the relation between formal NGOs and governments, but the heterogeneous structure of NSOs which emerges from the Internet communication and forms in the "asserting rights movements" during the past decade is developing an autopoietic system of NSOs. The state-society relationship has been theoretically reshaped by the emerging NSO politics which is framed by the endogenous anti-authoritarian structures as follows:

- Heterotopia Internet (communication) and heterarchical Internet-based NSOs;
- Contentious politics and autopoietic structure of "asserting rights NSOs" (PSMOs).

Amonst which, the durability of this structural politics of NSOs is determined, either practically or theoretically (see Sewell, 1992: 24), by the the depth of the anti-authoritarian structures—particularly, by the hidden structure or hidden networks of NSOs as I illustrated above; and, such an autopoietic system of NSOs is composed of and reproduced by the episodic events (namely protesting actions).

8.1.4 Conclusion I: late authoritarianism as a whole

Vis-à-vis the contentious politics of the 1980s, especially the 1989's democracy movement, which was criticized to be confined by the Confucianism values without a basic consciousness of citizen rights, civil society, etc (Vittoz, 1993; Goldman et al., 2002), the NSO-centred asserting rights movements have changed the contentious politics and the relationship of state to society in present-day China, and also represents a new, autopoietic and episodic social transformation which is different from "the power of Tiananmen".[273]

Firstly, the rise of the asserting rights movements has deepened grassroots ties of NSOs with the masses via the Internet and the consciousness of "asserting rights", and enriched forms of contentious politics in a way of NSOs-organized-and-mobilized new social movements. Even in the depoliticised decade of the 1990s, as stated earlier, "Yet indirection and irony are by no means the only tools available to protesters in the face of repressive regimes" (Thorntor, 2002:680). Thus the new social movements broaden the sphere of participative politics or the meaning of "politics" *per se* in present-day China, and then go beyond the elite politics as Fewsmith (2001) insisted on. That is what the "politicisation" of NSOs refers to in China's authoritarian politics, in addition to the sense of social movements.

Vis-à-vis the Confucian pursuit of democratic targets in 1989's movements as Stanley Vittoz (1993) criticized, the roundabout process of the anti-authoritarian strategy of NSOs is also reflected

[273] Cf. Zhao, Dingxin (2001).

in the above structuration processes and marked by the launching of "asserting rights" and meanwhile the de-institutionalized development of NSOs. That is to say, by contest actions targeting concrete boundaries of citizenship and episodic events/actions, by mobilizing the masses through social movements, by loosely connected PSMOs, the new generation of liberal intellectuals who stemmed from online discourses and cyberprotests have developed a new contention mechanism, which is supported by the habitualized twin activisms of a new contentious politics and embedded upon the NSOs' heterarchical networks.

Moreover, vis-à-vis the "quasi-revolutionary" situation of the 1989 movement, NSOs' claim-making around citizenship appears more moderate (rational) but more effectively competent during the mobilization processes towards reshaping the social-structural foundation and re-establishing normative foundation in present-day China. Such a new social politics of NSOs thus goes beyond the "regime defection" of China's authoritarian regime as McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly (2001: 221, 222) highlight that the "regime defection", namely the Party/State's crucial control of China's social-structural foundation, may account for the failure of radicalization mechanism adopted by the student movement in 1989.

Secondly, systematically, once the NSOs have formed an autopoietic system with self-producing and self-enforcing boundaries of categories and networks, the lifeworld transforms to a new system vis-à-vis the existing authoritarian system. As the heterarchical structure of e-forum-based NSOs has essentially changed the nature of whole NSOs, it will structurally change the vertical relationship between the state and the citizens and reproduce its anti-authoritarian nature.

More precisely, the politicized transition from NSOs to PSMOs means that NSOs have become an independent social force since 2003, or a "societal conquest" over the authoritarian Party/state – a concept used by Linz and Stepan (1996: 51) in referring to the creation of social, cultural, and even economic spaces that resist or escape totalitarian control.

But, it is neither the "detotalitarianism" in Linz and Stepan's sense, nor a robust civil society as Linz and Stepan held that an authoritarian regime in its late stage might have (Linz and Stepan, 1996: 55). NSOs' contentious politics is still a non-institutionalized politics, limited by the nature and the structure of social movements – being subject to the anti-authoritarian nature of the central structure of NSOs (the new generation of liberal intellectuals), and the interdependence between them and the whole political community. The activisms available can only exert effects by mediate of episodic events, rather than the institutional politics, thus leaving very little room for probably institutionalized corporatism cooperation.

From this point, the above structuration of NSOs appears to be a more effective roundabout transformation towards an on-going construction of civil society, having gained more social resources, influence and recognition. For instance, in the case of FLG, it encountered institutional obstacles during the final legal recognition. The institutionalisation process was brutally intervened in just because of a primary fear of FLG's well-developed network and mobilizing structure (Chan, 2004:683). Paradoxically, since then, a "New Religious Movement" (ibid) of FLG eventually evolved into an anti-authoritarian social movement. Hence the "state-instrumentalism" in Chan's terms ironically led to FLG's continuous global protest and meanwhile deepened structuration of mainstream NSOs in the following years.

In some other episodic events – the autopoiethesis-oriented rationalization of social life, such as Sun Zhigang's death – the starting point of NSMs, societal power was even translated into state's self-restraint. What the "resilient authoritarianism" refers to and reflects, nevertheless, is also confined to reforming and restraining the local governments for better governance.[274] Some rhetoric used by NSOs, e.g. the "social vulnerable groups", was also reflected in the official slogans.[275] However, such spill-over effects were often misunderstood as the "populist

[274] The self-restraining of the state is derived from the concept "horizontal governance". It was launched by G. O'Donnell (1998). See also Andreas Schedler, Larry Diamond, and Marc E. Plattner (2005).

[275] See Page 61.

authoritarianism" as Dickson (2005) recently put it. From the (new) corporatism perspective, the anti-authoritarian and structural power of NSOs is easily overlooked and thus roughly processed as that of the public opinion.

Therefore, all the above "authoritarian resilience" (Nathan, 2003) or "populist authoritarianism" (Dickson, 2005) or "new corporatism" (Ma, 2002b) share a common of the social reality and reflect the duality of the emerging structural politics of NSOs in varying aspects: a morphogenetic civil society on the one side, and a "late authoritarianism" on the other side.[276]

Whilst the morphogenetic civil society provides us with an ideal type conception and temporal dimension for measuring NSOs' structuration, the term late authoritarianism reflects such an external structure crossing time and space that the authoritarianism regime will maintain it without triggering democratisation in the long term future (see also Nathan, 2003). Since such a duality of structural politics bases on and derives from the duality of NSOs' structure, the two neighboring elements co-exist interdependently and constitute a "late authoritarianism as a whole".[277]

More importantly, in between that of the dual elements, is the anti-authoritarian nature of NSOs, as a replacement of the institutionalized autonomy in a traditional civil society connecting the duality of NSOs' structural politics, that has essentially changed the nature of the ruling authoritarianism and the authoritarian reproduction of state-society relationship. Under the authoritarian Party/state, there should have been no space for the civil society, except the so-called

[276] Generally speaking, in the authoritarian regimes, such as Turkey and Ruassia, the corporatist and limited pluralism may exist but be limited by the relatively low specified political institutions (i.e. the lowly institutionalized control institutions in this dissertation), which have penetrated the life of society, according to Juan Linz's recent essays of authoritarian regimes. (See Linz, 2000: 159-161)

On the other hand, the concept "morphogenesis", originally a terminology of developmental biology, is highlighted by Margaret S. Archer (1982, 1995) as a realism approach to social theory to differ from structural individualism and structuration theory. Although what Archer refers to the morphogenesis approach differs against both the structuration theory and structural individualism this dissertation lies on, we use the term morphogenetic to distinguish the developmental civil society as a specific "temporal aspect of the emergence" of NSOs' structure in the social reality correspondingly, because it is very close to the features of the episodic transformation of NSOs. For Archer, the activity of transformation or reproduction potential also transforms (or reproduces) the agency of those who thus act, and "all structural influences are mediated to people by shaping the situations in which they find themselves" (Archer, 1995:196). Only in these episodic instances, where the NEs exert their background capacities at stake, can outside observers observe the structural properties of NSOs.

[277] The concept "late authoritarianism as a whole" is borrowed from Mandel's "late capitalism as a whole". (See Ernest Mandel ([1972] 1978, chapter 17) In this dissertation, it refers to the changed reproduction of authoritarianism.

"state-led society".[278] In practice, it has been embedded in the deep structure of NSOs, translated to the autopoietic movement of NSOs and led to a morphogenetic civil society as the constructed outcome of NSOs' structuration. Then, the morphogenetic civil society has two levels of meanings:

- That NSOs as a whole have acquired the most important characteristics that a modern civil society — or a rationalized lifeworld — should have, according to Cohen and Arato (1992:434), in particular, the Internet-based communicative actions and public sphere (nevertheless very limited). At least in those episodic events/protest actions, we can find that NSOs as a broadest political community display certain "temporal aspect of the emergence" of civil society. I.e., such a developmental civil society can be detected as morphogenetic-like situations – "all structural influences are mediated to people by shaping the situations in which they find themselves" (Archer, 1995:196).

- Vis-à-vis Luhmann's distinction between civil society and political society or the distinction between traditional civil society and modern civil society as Cohen and Arato pointed out (see Cohen and Arato, 1992, Chapter 9), such a civil society in forming instead has not been institutionalized, nor exists separately outside the domain of political power. Structurally, it is underpinned by a twofold interpenetration: Firstly, being a constructivist outcome of NSOs' autopoietic movement, it co-develops morphologically with the citizenship-centred detached identity, through which the conventional embedded identity derived from *Unit System* and *Guanxi* has been changing. Secondly, its space is subject to the boundary-spanning outcome of the NSOs-centred contentious (category) politics against the authoritarian institutions, and then the systematic differentiation within the power structure as the asserting rights movements and the resilience of authoritarianism demonstrate to us in previous chapters (see also Taylor, 1990).

[278] According to JR Wedel (1994:323; recited from Chris Hahn, 1996), "a civil society exists when individuals and groups are free to form organizations that function independently of the state and that can mediate between citizens and the state."

Consequently, such a conception of morphogenetic civil society may well capture the realistic relationship between NSOs' structural politics and the late authoritarian state in urban China – the nature and reproduction of state-society relationship are totally changed by the anti-authoritarian autopoiesis of NSOs. The once "filtered concept" of civil society in the mid-1990s' China as Metzger (1998) observed has become an observable and relational trend.

8.2 Conclusion II: the social origin of China's NSOs

Theoretically, having arrived at the resulting "late authoritarianism", it is possible to answer the origin of such a transformation – the origin of the above structural duality of NSOs' structural politics. As O'Donnell and Schmitter assert that, "there is no transition whose beginning is not the consequence—direct or indirect—of important divisions within the authoritarian regime itself."[279]

Salamon and Anheier in their seminal essay (1998) formulated five models of the social origins of the NPO sector on the grounds of an economic perspective developed by Weisbrod (1977) and Rose-Ackerman and James (1986): a) the government failure/market failure theory; b) supply-side theory; c) trust theory; d) welfare state theory; and e) the interdependency theory.

Regarding the origin of emerging NGOs in urban China, the mainstream state-dominated theories are seemingly close to Skocpol's account rather than Salamon and Anheier's equilibrium-based models, varying to the degree of auto-organization i.e. distance or relation between NGOs and Party/state – on this basis, we have identified three conceptual strategies in characterizing such a relationship in preceding chapters. However, they fail to accounting for NSOs' politicization movement in an on-going transformation and the further implication as to how such a movement would shape the authoritarianism.

Nevertheless, according to Berger and Luckmann's structuralism notion about the institutional evolution, history "as the tradition of existing institutions" depends on collective memory – "a

[279] See O'Donnell and Schmitter (1986:19).

stock of common knowledge" of individuals. This social distribution of knowledge among individuals and society and generations is just the process of social construction of reality, "containing within it the roots of an expanding institutional order" (Berger and Luckmann, 1964:75).

To reach the structural origin of NSOs, a structural-politics analysis is required to penetrate the depth of NSOs' structure from the surface structure to the deep structure. According to William Sewell (1992: 22, 24), the surface structures, such as NSOs' institutional and social innovations, are "a set of transformations of the deep structures", while the power of a structure – i.e. the political meaning of NSOs' structures – appears to be determined by the depth of the structure. That is the durability of a structure – pointing to the evolutionary order, structural origin and the prospect of NSOs.

As previous chapters have revealed step by step, Chinese NSOs after 1989, as a continuum, developed in a way of incremental changing from the depoliticization to the politicization, and created an autopoietic structure as both the outcome and mediate of NSO's structuration. That is a threefold autopoietic community of NSOs:

- The heterarchical networks of Chinese NSOs;
- The asserting rights movements;
- And the group of NSO entrepreneurs.

As the objectified results of the three-layer structuration that NSOs have undergone in the past 15 years, they correspond to the three aspects of the deep structures:

- The submerged (central) networks of NSOs;
- The (rational) oppositional consciousness;
- And the habitualized activism of NSO entrepreneurs and NSO participants.

Through these deep structures, we can find three examples of structural evidence of the memory traces and as instantiated in action, in Giddens' sense (Giddens 1984:377), all pointing to the social origin of NSOs:

- The reconstruction of collective memory of the 1989's democratic movement;
- The relationship between the new generation of young public intellectuals and older liberal intellectuals;
- And the NSOs' "asserting rights movements" as the revised revival of the democratic movement.

The reconstruction of collective memory by means of the Internet about the 1989 democracy movement in this sense has reconstructed the reality of society. It not only fills the historical gap in the depoliticised decade of the 1990's and reshapes the collective identity among the new generation of liberal intellectuals/NSO activists; but also, from the starting point of online communities to the discourse and then citizenship-centred detached identity and social movements, demonstrates to us a new category politics or an alternative line of Giddensian structuration order against the authoritarian regime that depends on the widespread pragmatism and political apathy among the intellectuals and the mass after 1989.

Hence, from the above constructivist, relational and normative relation between currently new social movements and the 1989 movement, in particular, from the social production of NSO agents (as a new generation of liberal intellectuals and NSO entrepreneurs) – self-categorization, network integration, and transformation of resistance identity, it is fair to see the development of China's NSOs after 1998 as a "re-politicized move" and a "revival" of the pro-democracy movements in the 1980s. That is the social origin of China's NSOs.

Looking back, we should keep in mind that such a finding is not the only constructivist origin of NSOs, but a self-referential consequence of the NSOs' structuration. Having elaborated on the

transformational processes of NSOs, we can understand that the above deepening processes of NSOs' structuration construct but hide the structural origin themselves, thus re-define the anti-authoritarian nature of NSOs and associated new social movements in present-day China.

Therefore, from NSOs' structuration and institutionalization, it is fair to say that such an anti-authoritarian nature has penetrated the overall development of NSOs from the very beginning, such as the origin of FON in 1993. Even during the depoliticized interval between 1989 and 1998, those "old intellectuals" as a whole who mobilized the democracy movements in 1980s turned to launch the public discourse of civil society in the mid-1990s and thus forged perhaps the most important consciousness foundation for the "asserting rights movements" later on.

In practice, such an anti-authoritarian nature or origin does not mean it is repeated in every appropriate case. Instead, such a "historical-institutional legacy" (Croissant, Merkel and Sandschneider, 1999) that has been embedded in the deep structure of NSOs and transformed to the new social movements, only represents to outside observers through episodic events.

In the long run, the duality of the late authoritarianism as a whole has structured its future. Nevertheless, the relation or potential tension between the late authoritarian state and the NSOs-centred social politics appears to be very subtle. On the one hand, as long as the ruling Party/state maintains the authoritarian regime, NSOs' contentions will be confined to the category of social politics and thus it seems no sense to predict the transition to democracy in China.[280] Similarly, although the Internet has proved itself as playing an important role in the rise of new contentious politics in China, the social implication of the Internet at most is only bound to the public (discursive) sphere in present urban China, rather than democracy (Kluver, 2005).

On the other hand, as what the concept of the morphogenetic civil society characterized, the episodic transformation as the basic form of Giddensian structuration of NSOs—the episodic events function as both the mediate and outcome of the structuration—has produced and will

[280] See also Bruce Gilley (2005).

increasingly reproduce episodic events in the foreseeable future and thus comprises increasing openness and possibilities for change.[281] Nevertheless, the further implications of the emerging NSOs and what they may have for the social-political transformation of urban China are to be measured by the practical development in the future.

[281] Analogously, Jay Ulfelder (2005) shows that some kinds of authoritarian regimes are more vulnerable to breakdown in the wake of contentious events.

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APPENDIX I

The List of Interviewees

No.	Name (Pseudonym)	Gender	Age (by 2004)	Career	Time	Place	Notes
001	Dr.SU Zhenhua	M	32	PhD in Econmics, Internet Activist	Mar.19,2005,18:30-20:00 Apr.23, 2005,20:30-22:30	Hangzhou, Beijing	Noting
002	WEN Kejian (He ZOngqin)	M	33	Businessman, Internert activist	Mar.19, 2005,18:30-20:00 Mar.20, 2005,16:00-17:00	Hangzhou	Compliance noting
003	ZHU Rikun	M	30(?)	Launcher of video-film club; Launcher of e-NGO (NGOChina)	Apr.05, 2005,18:30-21:30	Beijing	Noting
004	Dr.JIA Xijin	F	32	NGO specialist (Tsinghua Uni., NGO Insitute)	Apr.08, 2005,13:30-14:30	Beijing,	Compliance noting
005	WEN Bo	M	30	ENGO activist, (GGF's representative in China)	Apr.09, 2005,14:57-16:10	Beijing	Recording No.: A001
006	CHEN Yun	F	28	ENGO's full-time employee (Xinjiang Natural Conservations)	Apr.09, 2005,14:57-16:10	Beijing	Recording No.: A001
007	SONG Xinzhou	M	28	Director of ENGO	Apr.09, 2005,17:00-18:00	Beijing	Recording No.: A002
008	SHI Xinhao	M	22	Student volunteer (Green Student Forum)	Apr.10, 2005,14:00-14:15	Beijing	Recording No.: A003
009	N.A.	F	20	Student volunteer (SENOL)	Apr.10, 2005,16:00-16:15	Beijing	Recording No.: A006
010	BAI Yunwen	F	22	Director of student ENGO (Green Student Forum)	Apr.10, 2005,16:15-18:31	Beijing	Recording No.: A007, A009, A010
011	YUE Jinxiao	F	22	Student volunteer (Green Student Forum)	Apr.10, 2005,16:30-18:46	Beijing	Recording No.: A008, A011
012	LIU Lishan	F	28	Freelancer, environmental volunteer	Apr.10, 2005,17:00-17:30	Beijing	Recording No.: A012
013	LI Da	M	27(?)	Architect, volunteer	Apr.13, 2005,20:00-20:30	Beijing	Recording No.: A013
014	YU Zhou	F	28(?)	CSM Manager of products for disabled	Apr.13, 2005,21:00-21:45	Beijing	Recording No.: A015
015	SHEN Xu	F	30	Director of ENGO (Green Web)	Apr.14, 2005,14:00-15:30	Beijing	Recording No.: A016
016	DOU Lei	F	21	Student volunteer (Green Student Forum)	Apr.14, 2005,17:15-17:55	Beijing	Recording No.: A017
017	LIU Yapeng	M	22	Student volunteer (Green Student Forum)	Apr.14, 2005,17:15-17:55	Beijing	Recording No.: A017
018	WANG Yao	F	24	Launcher of student ENGO (Green Stone)	Apr.14, 2005,21:00-22:30	Beijing	Recording No.: A018, A019, A020
019	LI Jinchun	M	34	Senior employee in bank, Represenative of Furunjiayuan House-owner Committee	Apr.18, 2005,10:00-19:00	Beijing	Recording No.: A023,A024
020	LI Jian	F	26	Employee of ENGO (FON)	Apr.19, 2005,18:50-20:15	Beijing	Recording No.: A025,A026
021	HAN Tao	M	39	Volunteer of ENGO (FON), Launcher of NGO(Institute of Public Health and Education)	Apr.19, 2005,20:35-22:25	Beijing	Recording No.: A027
022	ZHANG Jilian	F	45(?)	Experienced employee of ENGO (FON)	Apr.21, 2005,14:00-15:00	Beijing	Recording No.: A028,A029
023	Rao Yong	M	26	Volunteer of ENGO(FON, Green Camel)	Apr.21, 2005,15:00-15:30	Beijing	Recording No.: A030
024	LIAO Xiaoyi	F	48(?)	Launcher & Director of ENGO(Global Village(Beijing))	Apr.21, 2005,17:17-18:20	Beijing	Recording No.: A031,A032
025	CHEN Yongmiao	M	28	Lawyer, jounralist, famed Internet activist, and organizer of GT offline Saloon	Apr.23, 2005,18:30-21:00 Mar.22,8:30-11:30	Beijing	
026	GAO Tian	M	30	Environemental activist, Launcher of ENGO (Green Web)	Apr.24, 2005, Apr.25,2005,9:00-0:00	Xuanhua-Beijing	Recording No.: A034

027	QU Dong	M	31	Director and launcher of community NGO (Greenroots, Shanghai))	Apr.25, 2005,15:00-16:30	Beijing	Recording No.: A035,A036
028	YU Jie	F	29(?)	Employee of INGO (Green Peace, Beijing)	Apr.26, 2005,14:30-15:10	Beijing	Recording No.: A037
029	WU Dunhong	M	29(?)	Manager, Internet activist	May 1, 2005,11:30-12:30	Hangzhou	Noting
030	SHEN Yachuan	M	32	Journalist, launcher of Internet NGO(Light of Hope)	May 6, 2005,20:30-22:00	Beijing	Compliance noting
031	NIE Hailiang	M	32	Businessman, Representative of Huilongguan House-owner Association, Representaive of People's Congress (Cangping district, Beijing)	May 9, 2005,11:00-12:20	Beijing	Recording No.: A038
032	QIN Huan	M	38(?)	Launcher of Hammer Motor Club	May 9, 2005,15:40-17:00	Beijing	Noting
033	FU Tao	M	37	Office director of NGO (China Development Brief)	May 10, 2005,14:00-16:00	Beijing	Recording No.: A039
034	CHEN Yueqin	F	35	Lawyer, representaive of Huaqingjiayuan House-owner Association	May 11, 2005,18:30-21:00	Beijing	Noting
035	Dr.XU Zhiyong	M	35	Lecturer of law, launcher of civil rights NGO (OCI), representative of People's Congress (Haidian district, Beijing)	May 11, 2005,18:30-21:00	Beijing	Noting
036	HU Jia	M	30	Director and launcher of HIV/AIDS NGO(Aizhi Action, Lovesource)	May 12, 2005,13:20-15:40	Beijing	Recording No.: A040
037	BEN Li	M	29	Accountant, launcher of e-forum(Beiwang)	Apr.12, 2005,10:00-11:00 May 13, 2005,12:00-17:00	Beijing Xi'an	Noting
038	DI Ma	M	30	Writor, regular participant of GT offline saloon (Xi'an)	May 14, 2005,10:00-10:30	Xi'an	Recording No.: A041
039	DU Yilong	M	40	Teacher in middle school, organizer of GT offline saloon (Xi'an)	May 14, 2005,18:30-22:30	Baoji	Noting
040	ZHEN Jian	M	22	Student volunteer	May 15, 2005,12:00-13:00	Xi'an	Recording No.: A042
041	HUANG Guangsheng	M	22	Student volunteer	May 15, 2005,12:00-13:00	Xi'an	Recording No.: A042
042	WANG Yi	M	32	Lecturer of law, famed Internet activist and columnist, launcher of constitutional e-forum, organizer of GT offline saloon (Chengdu)	May 17,9:20-12:30	Chengdu	Recording No.: A043
043	SONG Xianke	M	45	Lawyer,launcher and vice-secretary general of GDHA, organizer of GT offline saloon (Guangzhou)	May 20, 2005,8:50-12:00	Guangzhou	Recording No.: A044，A045
044	TANG Hao	M	31	Lecturer of political science, columnist, member of GDHA	May 20, 2005,16:30-18:30	Guangzhou	Compliance noting
045	CHEN Hentao	M	24	Employee of labour rights NGO (Panyu Migrant-worker Service)	May 21, 2005,10:50-11:20	Guangzhou	Recording No.: A046
046	ZENG Feiyang	M	30	Launcher of labour rights NGO(Panyu Migrant-worker Service)	May 21, 2005,13:15-13:45	Guangzhou	Recording No.: A047
047	Dr.LIU Kaiming	M	39	Former press editor, launcher of labour rights NGO (ICO, Shenzhen)	May 21, 2005,15:50-17:00	Shenzhen	Recording No.: A048
048	WANG Jihai	M	45	Self-employed, organizer of GT offline saloon(Shanghai)	May 27, 2005,9:00-10:30	Shanghai	Recording No.: A049
049	HU Yuwen	M	34	Book-businessman, long-term applicant for protest against corruption	May 27, 2005,9:00-10:30	Shanghai	Recording No.: A049
050	XU Zhenjun	M	27	Employee of NGO (Greenroots, Shanghai)	May 27, 2005,13:50-14:30	Shanghai	Recording No.: A050
51	Dr.TENG Jian	M	42	Launcher of Qiankuan Taiji Association	Dec.8, 2003, 17:00-19:30	Köln	Compliance noting
52	Dr.Fiedler	F	40	Staff Associate, Hong Kong office of Amity Foundation	May 18, 2005, 18:00-18:30	St.Augustin	Compliance noting
53	Dr.Liu Xiaobo	M	48	Poltical dissident, freelancer, president of ICPC	March 6,2006, 15:30-16:30	Beijing	Recording No.: A051
54	Yang Peng	M	44(?)	Former director of Yunnan Environmental Institute, Initators of Alasan Ecological Association (SEE), official of ministry of environment	March 11,2006,12:00-14:00	Beijing	Noting
55	Yu Jie	M	34	Former press editor, freelancer, vice-president of ICPC	Feb.28, 2006, 17:00-18:30	Beijing	

APPENDIX II

The source file of Figure 4.1

Input file(*.txt/*.net, can be decoded by Pajek

```
*Vertices   40
   1 "Amity"                    0.7389   0.2536   0.5000
   2 "FON"                      0.5923   0.3951   0.5000
   3 "GGF"                      0.7486   0.3453   0.5000
   4 "Global Village"             0.6287   0.2819   0.5000
   5 "Green Peace"                0.7173   0.6163   0.5000
   6 "Xinjiang Conservation"                  0.8160    0.4916
0.5000
   7 "Green Camel"                0.7165   0.5336   0.5000
   8 "Green Web"                  0.6343   0.5061   0.5000
   9 "Student Forum"              0.8377   0.4447   0.5000
  10 "Green Stone"                0.8226   0.3472   0.5000
  11 "Green Stone Fund"             0.9095   0.2527   0.5000
  12 "Development Brief"            0.6522   0.4218   0.5000
  13 "Grassroots Community"                  0.4859    0.5003
0.5000
  14 "GDHA"                      0.2957   0.4734   0.5000
  15 "Panyu WorkerService"                   0.3437    0.3117
0.5000
  16 "ICO"                     0.4405   0.3761   0.5000
  17 "Aizhixing"                 0.5608   0.5510   0.5000
  18 "Lovingsaurce"               0.4958   0.5468   0.5000
  19 "Constitution E-forum"                  0.3091    0.7144
0.5000
  20 "LOH"                     0.1691   0.4831   0.5000
  21 "Beiwang"                   0.2259   0.6145   0.5000
  22 "SENOL"                     0.7929   0.5601   0.5000
  23 "Green Camp"                  0.7588   0.4290   0.5000
  24 "Green Beijing"               0.6733   0.2283   0.5000
  25 "Green Roots"                 0.5556   0.4620   0.5000
  26 "OCIC"                    0.2206   0.6678   0.5000
  27 "IPQE"                    0.5278   0.1663   0.5000
  28 "Cathay"                    0.3962   0.6172   0.5000
  29 "GT Saloon"                   0.3403   0.6026   0.5000
  30 "Democracy E-forum"                     0.3337    0.5357
0.5000
  31 "Furun HOA"                   0.0908   0.7612   0.5000
  32 "Huilong HOA"                  0.0435   0.6429   0.5000
  33 "Huaqing HOA"                  0.1904   0.8442   0.5000
  34 "Wuxue"                     0.0434   0.5585   0.5000
  35 "Halley Club"                 0.3790   0.9566   0.5000
  36 "Video Club"                  0.3552   0.7863   0.5000
  37 "Ford Foundation"              0.4849   0.2433   0.5000
  38 "Oxfam"                     0.5026   0.3702   0.5000
  39 "CANGO"                       0.6115   0.2197   0.5000
  40 "IED"                     0.5577   0.3318   0.5000
*Arcs
   1    39 2
   2     3 2
   2     4 2
   2     7 1
   2     8 1
   2    23 1
   2    25 1
   2    27 1
   2    37 3
   2    40 1
   3     4 1
   3     6 1
   3     8 1
   3     9 1
   3    11 1
   3    23 1
   3    24 1
   4    24 1
   4    37 3
   4    38 3
   5     8 1
   8    38 3
   9    22 1
   9    23 1
  10    11 1
  10    23 1
  12     1 2
  12     2 2
  12     3 2
  12     4 2
  12     5 2
  12     6 2
  12     7 2
  12     8 2
  12     9 2
  12    10 2
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  13     8 1
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  19    26 1
  19    28 1
  19    29 1
  19    30 1
  19    21 2
  20    29 1
  20    21 1
  21    26 2
  21    28 1
  21    29 1
  21    30 1
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22 23 1
22 9 1
23 22 1
24 37 2
24 4 1
25 2 1
25 8 2
25 13 1
25 38 3
25 40 2
26 31 1
26 32 2
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26 29 1
26 28 1
26 14 1
27 2 1
28 19 1
28 29 1
28 30 1
29 30 1
29 28 1
29 14 1
29 19 1
29 20 1
34 21 2
36 29 1
36 21 1
*Edges
35 36 3
38 40 3
37 38 3
39 40 1
37 39 1
2 40 2
4 40 2

APPENDIX III

Examples of Internet posts and joint letters

1. Two lasting-three-year posts as cyberprotests

1.1 Shen Yachuan (Shifeike) and his independent investigation about the skecpital death of Li Shangpin.[282]

『关天茶舍』对被枪杀教师李尚平案件的个人调查（综合补充版）

作者：石扉客 提交日期：2002-12-01 00:53:00

说明：

李尚平老师 2002 年 4 月 26 日遇害，遗下白发双亲、同样是教师的遗孀和 4 岁半的孩子。 迄今 219 天，此案依然未破。

《对被枪杀教师李尚平案件的个人调查》一帖自 2002 年 7 月 15 日凌晨帖于天涯社区关天茶社和天涯杂谈，蒙天涯站方多次关照，更加上得到天涯内外无数热心网友的矢志关注，虽历经数次风险，一直坚持到 11 月 20 日，点击率逾万、跟帖逾千，和“李尚平先生网上纪念馆” htttp://cn.netor.com/m/box200207/m17065.asp?BoardID=17065）一起成为网络上下关注李尚平案件的重要地方。在此以个人名义谨表谢意。

由于天涯站方系统的原因，该帖不便再行跟帖。为方便网友始终关注这个和我们同样上下 BBS 却惨遭枪杀的普通教师，我们重开一帖，将此前散落的各处跟帖补充进来，按时间次序整理如下。

请各位遵循理性、冷静、坚韧的原则纪念李尚平老师，尽量把这个帖子维持到此案真相大白之日！本帖所有内容，最后将全部打印出来伴随李尚平的孩子长大成人。

『关天茶舍』对被枪杀教师李尚平案件的个人调查

作者：石扉客 提交日期：2002-7-15 0:28:00

［一］

6 月 12 日从上海回到长沙，第二天上午从长沙汽车西站坐车往益阳。在依维柯上等了半天，车主的营运线路牌刚出站就被几个神情不善的人扣住 了，也不知道是路政、交警还是那个部门的管理人员，等到折腾完毕出西站上长益高速到达益阳市区已经快 11 点了，车窗外天空突然乌云密布，一反早上从长沙出 发时的晴空万里。和接应的益阳网友小 C 联系上后，在朝阳路下车等待，益阳市区竟是出奇的安静，街上行人稀少，在笔直广阔的车道映衬下忽然有几份萧杀的感 觉，想起小 C 电邮里说过的一句“如果你是一个人，最好不要来”，心下竟有几份悚然，不知道是越压越低的乌云还是自己心情的原因。

小 C 携他爱人如约而至，是两个和我年纪相仿的年轻人，大家简单介绍了一下彼此的情况，小 C 另外一个朋友开车过来，大家前往赫山区龙光桥镇李尚平家，天色越来越暗，车子刚出益阳市区，雨点就已经砸下来了。

［二］

李家离市区并不算太远，一路经过益阳羊舞岭中学，便到了李尚平遇害的现 场（见照片 1）：从羊舞岭中学到李家是一条和柏油路相接的简易砂石路，宽约 4 米，可以通汽车，路两边是茂密的茶树林和竹林，凶手选择了这段弯路，道路两端 的视线被树林和弯路的曲面挡住。下车仔细查看了这段路面，出弯路约 200 米处左侧是益阳某武装部的枪械仓库，约 300 米处左侧是益阳市公安干校，右侧 100 米处即李尚平家，从李家的二楼可以看到干校的宿舍楼（见照片 2）。这里是李骑摩托车上下班的必经之地，凶手显然是早已经勘察好了地形，持枪预伏于路 边，2002 年 4 月 26 日下午 5 时 40 分许，李尚平从南塘中学下班回家，在这里遇伏，子弹从正面击中李的脸部，自后脑穿出。李中枪摔倒后，凶手将他连人带 车推到路边的矮坎下茶树林中，将凶器--经过改制的发令枪扔到现场附近的草丛中（后被警方勘察现场时找到），然后从容逃逸，据说后来警方调查时现场附近有 好几个人听到了枪声，而第一个发现现场的是一个在益阳市做保安的尹姓当地农民。小 C 陪我在雨中抓拍了几张照片，说，李尚平的尸体被人发现

[282] The initial post published by Shen Yachuan (Shi Fei Ke) has been deleted by Tianya company without explanation. This post is a saved copy in late 2003 (only partly showed here). After that, there are over ten associated initial posts, soughting to continue the theme of Li Shangpin.

The second post illustrated here is among one of early posts calling for public attensions to Li's death, published on August 20, 2002 and ended on November 1, 2006, still available at: http://www5.tianya.cn/New/PublicForum/Content.asp?idWriter=0&Key=0&strItem=no01&idArticle=25535&flag=1.

后首先以为是车 祸，遗体被拉回家后，李的亲属看到尸体的半边脸已经塌陷下去，子弹从后脑钻出时巨大的冲击力形成的贯通伤呈漏斗状，始怀疑是枪杀，于是报警，随后的法医检 验证实了这个判断。

沿着这条夺去李尚平性命的砂石路往前，不到十分钟，我们就到了李家。李尚平家是城市近郊和农村常见的独门独户 的两层楼房，一个不大的院子里传来紧张的狗吠声，铁栅栏门紧闭着（见照片 3）。李的父母和另外一个亲戚都在家，李的奶奶也还健在，李四岁半的儿子好奇的看 着我们，问他叫什么名字，孩子奶奶告诉我们就叫李知道，他爸爸给取的名字！

小 C 告诉我，李的妻子刘云娥也是教师，在益阳黄泥湖中 学教书。孩子奶奶带我们到楼上李尚平的书房，迎面就看见李的电脑桌，显示器上放着李知道的照片，桌上还散乱着一些文件。空荡荡的的电脑椅静静的对着我们， 李知道爬到这个他爸爸永不会回来坐的宽大椅子上顽皮的冲我们笑（照片 4）。书房的一侧靠墙是一面宽大的书架，李尚平的遗像放在书架最上面一排，书架中间靠 左一排是金庸全集和古龙全集，是我熟悉的海南出版社前几年出的缩微本，综红封面异常醒目（照片 5、6）。其他书多是<吕氏春秋>等文史类和 <译林>杂志等外语类，和李的英语专业出身与中学教师身份很是吻合（照片 7、8）。

［三］

小 C 是李尚平的挚友，和我说及李的经历和性格。李尚平生于 1970 年 12 月（他母亲说阴历实际上是 69 年 10 月），也算是 70 年代生人。在这个已经少有人记日记的时代，李尚平却留下了整整 21 本大大小小各式各样的日记（照片 9、10），还不包括他存在电脑 里的最近三年的日记，在 1993 年的一本日记里面，李尚平用工整的字迹记载了自己最大的志向是“做一个说真话的作家”，人生目的是“以公正管辖天下”（照 片 11）。据说正是梗直的个性使他的任教学校奇异的从高到低反向排列：1993 年毕业于益阳师专英语系的李尚平，先后于省级重点中学益阳县一中、益阳羊舞 岭中学、宁家铺小学任教，直到几年前，他才被调到南塘中学。

市场经济时代使有能力的人在单位之外也能得到拓展空间，不同于一般清 贫的乡村教师家庭，李是个非常能干又热爱生活的人，小 C 说，在单位郁郁不得志的李尚平，为了贴补家用，经常利用业余时间在外面兼职，包括在益阳农校兼课和益阳图文电视台做编辑等。李似乎是个讲究完美的人，李家 的小院虽然简陋却收拾得整整齐齐，甚至为了保持地面平整，细心的李尚平连院落中大树露出地面的树兜也清理得干干净净（照片 12）。

而网络就在这个时候以势不可挡的力量闯入了李尚平的视野。从 2000 年开始，李尚平买了电脑，开始了他的 BBS 之旅。针对生活当中的不公和 以及和他工作直接相关的教育腐败，李尚平不断的在“焦点网谈”、“K12 教师频道”、湖南“红网”、新浪网等地的 BBS 上发布帖子，进而向《中国教育咨讯 报》、《中国教育报》等纸质媒体写信；李尚平在 BBS 上发帖用的 ID 叫做“老九”，和一般 ID 不一样的是，李常常在帖子里面公布自己的真实身份和联系电 话，以示对内容的真实性负责。

李尚平的日记记载：2002 年 3 月 21 日，李反映的龙光桥镇 600 名教师被拖欠工资的事情终于被湖 南有线电视台都市频道播出，尔后迫于舆论压力，当地政府补发了教师们去年 12 月份的工资。这个巨大成功是李尚平 BBS 生涯的最高峰，让这个网络时代的唐吉 珂德兴奋不已。他随后在红网的一个帖子里写道：“有人会在适当的时候给我小鞋穿的，官们都不喜欢我这种‘兴风作浪’的刁民。不过我不会害怕，我会将斗争进 行到底！必要时候我将运用法律武器，根据《教师法》和《劳动法》的有关规定，对有关部门提起行政诉讼，为全体老师讨回一个公道。即使我被迫下岗，也在所不 惜。我要我们的老师不再永远唯唯诺诺地任人摆布，我要我的同事们都挺起腰杆做一回人。”

看来李尚平这个时候已经估计到了可能会出现的报复，但是他显然没有料到就在一个月后的 4 月 26 日，就在离家不到 400 米的地方，他会倒在黑洞洞的枪口下面！

［四］

窗外一直是大雨淋漓，闷热的天气让人大汗如注衣杉尽湿，小 C 的妻 子说，李尚平遇难的那天也是这样的天气。我们离开李尚平的书房时，李知道不肯下楼，靠在他爸爸的日记旁呆呆的看着我们（照片 13），李的母亲扑倒在隔壁房 间的床上哀哀痛哭。李的父亲李三保是一位身材高大的退休老教师，据说正是这个倔强的老人在自家的堂屋里办起了村子里的第一所小学。不顾我们的劝阻，老年痛 失爱子的两位老人坚持到门外给我们送别（照片 14）。

在回益阳的车上，小 C 说，以前他经常晚上骑摩托车赶到李尚平家里，兄弟俩一 起吃肉喝酒，畅谈到天亮。他常常劝李改一改梗直的个性，却收效甚微。4 月 26 日李尚平遇难时，他正在从北京回益阳的火车上，被痛失好友的无边悲痛和愤怒所笼罩，此后利用一切机会为遇难好友呼吁便成了他一个越来越强烈的信念。不过压力也越来越重，空气中似乎能嗅出某种让人不安的信息：益阳和湖南当地的媒体， 对 4。26 案件保持着一致的缄默。到目前为止，到益阳来采访过的媒体只有著名的《南方周末》和北京一家今年刚刚创办的报纸〈中国教育咨讯报〉，而已经做过 公开报道的也只有后者（5 月 15 日）。

下午四点，雨愈下愈大，匆匆赶回长沙。

后记：

李尚平 4 月 26 日遇害，我最早是收到 5 月 15 日的〈中国教育资讯报〉才获悉的，5 月底在天涯看到关于这个事情的帖子，和网友取得联系，6 月 13 日去益阳，今天是 7 月 13 日，距李尚平遇害已经整整 73 天，我才抽出时间把照片冲洗好（可惜有几张现场照片没有洗出来），一一扫描上来，托朋友做链接，动作如此之慢，可见我不会是一个合格的记者。另外，这篇帖 子实际上只是记载了我在 6 月 13 日一天所看到听到的非常有限的内容，而一个具体全面的调查至少应该再访问以下人员和部门：

1、 李尚平的妻子；
2、 李尚平生前的同事；
3、 第一个发现现场的尹姓农民；
4、 益阳市公安局和赫山区公安分局；
5、 益阳市和赫山区教育局、龙光桥镇教育办；

限于时间，限于笔者的民间身份，我不可能从当前体制内获得关于 4 .26 案更多的信息和资源。就目前的情况分析，李尚平之死不一定就和他生前触犯的利益集团有必然的因果关系，至少没有明显的直接证据。所以我们似乎不能说 他是烈士，是英雄，是死得重于泰山--在正统意识形态的牌坊体系内，是没有办法找到李的位置的。但是这个案件的蹊跷之处足以让人怀疑李的遇难决不是一件偶 然的意外事件：李遭遇枪杀的时间和地点证明是一件精心设计的谋杀；李被枪杀后身上的戒指以及骑的摩托车都没有被凶手取走，证明这不是以谋财为目的的抢劫； 李简单的社会关系和口碑流传的正派作风也排除了情杀的可能；而一枪命中目标的枪法和扔在作案现场的凶器宣示了职业杀手的娴熟技巧和某种可能的示威与侗吓心 理。

那么，李尚平究竟和谁结下了深仇大恨？究竟是谁要取李尚平的性命？

一切都只是某种怀疑，一切都只能等待赫山区公安分局的破案进程，抓住凶手，找出背后的主谋。

我个人呼吁：

媒体不应该对这个案件保持沉默（我们已经看到有负责任的媒体在默默的工作），而有责任敢担当的网友也应该出来用冷静、理性、持久的呼声来打 破这种可怕的麻木隔膜局面，益阳市特别是赫山区龙光桥镇的老师们，那些李尚平用鲜血和汗水捍卫过的人们，更应该站出来，积极给办案机关提供线索，给李尚平 的家人以支持和关慰！

希望 4.26 案件能够被早日列入湖南省公安厅甚至公安部的督办案件（如果因果关系坐实的话，李尚平将是第一个因为反腐败被枪杀的教师，也是网络时代第一个因为发帖子而死在枪口下的 BBS 写手！）；衷心希望赫山区公安分局的干警们能够早日破案。从这个意义上说， 我甚至希望到了真相太白的那一天，真的能够证明这个正直教师的不幸遇难只不过是一场意外，而黑暗并没有我们想象的那么暗无边际那么疯狂残忍那么肆无忌惮！

附录：1、14 张照片：（照片还没有帖上来，朋友的链接一到即补上）。

2、本文所有照片均已得到李尚平家人授权发布；

3、李尚平父亲李三保老师的联系方式：

电话：0737-4689689

地址：湖南益阳市赫山区龙光桥镇长坡村

4、本人对本文内容和观点负责，欢迎转载。

关于救助，我个人认为，李尚平家目前似乎经济上并不是特别困难，他们最需要的，恐怕是道义上的支持以及从自己实际情况出发的具体技巧上的帮助。有心且有力的网友，不知道能否帮李尚平做一个网上文集或者吊唁灵堂？

对本文有疑问或者有其他想法的朋友，请与我联系：QQ24471375，邮箱：shifeike@163.com;电话 02154361739 转 207。

我不过是一个 BBS 潜水者，和李尚平无亲无故；湖南是我的故乡，我也曾经在那里做过几年教师。 李尚平惨烈的遭遇让我涌起作为教师和 BBS 中人的同道悲怆，兔死狐悲，如麻雀君所说，“下一个目标，是你；再下一个，是我。”于是有了益阳之旅。

而文中所有的记载均来自李尚平家人和朋友的描述，李的尸体早已火化，我不可能看到具体的情况，公安局的法医鉴定和现场勘察笔录我也无权翻阅。因此在局部的 细节方面可能会有差距，但是在“遭遇枪杀”和“凶手用的是改装的发令枪”这两点上肯定无讹。笔者从事过 5 年刑事诉讼法教学研究，以简陋的知识和现场目击的 情况来分析：

“凶手的预谋”和“用改装过的发令枪来做凶器”这两者之间似乎没有必然的因果联系，也就是说用 54、64、77 式、改装的发令抢、猎枪、土铳任何一种都可以预谋杀人。

而凶手在李尚平进入射程内究竟以何种方式开枪，是远距离瞄准伏击还是佯装问路，俟李减速或者停车之际再近距离突然开枪，我不得而知，相信通过法医鉴定中的 尸体检验会比较容易解决这个问题。假如是近距离开枪，虽然是改装的发令枪，子弹进入人体后巨大的冲击力和阻力相互作用是比较可能造成文中所列的伤口形状 的。如有足够把握一枪毙命，是没有必要用五四枪的，毕竟后者是刻有枪号的军用枪，目标太大。

一直困扰我的一是凶手为什么要把枪扔在现场。按照刑事侦查的常例，涉枪案件中枪支往往是破案的最大线索（95 年轰动粤港澳三地的番禺工行抢劫案，后来破案 主要就是通过嫌犯掉在做案用的工具车上的一支军用枪，以枪找人抓住曾任广州某银行经警的案犯）。估计可能是为了降低脱逃的风险，但是和被循迹抓获的风险比 较，前者的概率要小的多。我觉得合理的解释是某种程度的示威和恫吓。

二是动机问题。排除抢劫和情杀等因素外，还有一种可能是莫名其妙的死于非命，就象张君集团曾经多次干过的用无辜的生命来训练枪法或者拉人入伙。但是如果是这样，把枪扔在现场又解释不通了。如是似乎只剩下一种可能，就是仇杀。

按照常例，这样的案件，有枪支作为线索，有合理怀疑作为挖掘动机，而当局对涉枪涉爆案件又向来是持严厉打击政策。假如能列入省厅或者公安部督办案件，有领 导批示和经费保证，是完全有理由乐观的。只是中国的事情向来充满变数，如果强大的利益集团纠织在一起，真相大白之时要等到哪一天，不敢乐观。我们在这里呼 喊，只不过是为了天地良心。

石扉客，2002 年 7 月 13 日

作者：石扉客　回复日期：2003-03-16　23:14:56

本帖因有人恶意跟帖，不得不隐藏并删改修复，感谢各位热心关注此事的网络上下同人，感谢天涯网管以及斑竹支持，今天得以重新面世。

李尚平老师遇害至今已经有 324 天，此案依然未破。

祭奠！

2002-7-15　23:52:08 到 2003-03-13　20:07:32 的跟帖保存在
http://article.tianyaclub.com/2003/lishangping.html

2003-03-17　01:08:18 到 2003-04-19　01:42:16 的跟帖保存在
http://article.tianyaclub.com/2003/lsp.html

2003-04-19 02:10:43 到 2003-06-07 15:54:56 的跟帖保存在
http://article.tianyaclub.com/2003/jnlsp.html

2003-06-08 15:18:40 到 2003-07-21 17:19:02 的跟帖保存在
http://article.tianyaclub.com/2003/jinianlsp.html

作者：笑置之 回复日期：2003-07-21 17:56:50
以我这样的网名在这里跟帖，令我自己无地自容!然而，来不及换“马甲”，愤怒已涌满心头!我们面对的是这样的现实!我们愤怒却无可奈何，这难道是一个痞子制度?

作者：赵明 回复日期：2003-07-21 17:59:48
jin

作者：choice 回复日期：2003-07-21 18:29:07
顶
多 少 天 啦 ?

作者：Vicious 回复日期：2003-07-21 18:36:23
祭

李尚平君遇害第 451 天，此案迄今未破，祭奠!!!

作者：jydj035 回复日期：2003-07-21 20:25:22
继续关注

作者：夜鸿 回复日期：2003-07-21 20:53:19
看这个贴子已不下十次，每看一次，都感觉很揪心。我们的希望在哪里?

作者：修路人 回复日期：2003-07-21 21:44:44
沉冤待雪

作者：怡剑爱文 回复日期：2003-07-21 21:55:36
多 少 天 了 ~~
都麻木的不行了

作者：我是小醉 回复日期：2003-07-21 22:12:38
我们的希望就是没有希望！在现在的制度下永远没有希望！！！

作者：imdt 回复日期：2003-07-21 22:15:14
no hope, no way!

what can we do?

作者：temiwang 回复日期：2003-07-21 22:53:20
纪念李老师，也向石扉客致敬!

作者：大-地 回复日期：2003-07-22 01:25:43
李尚平君遇害第 452 天，此案迄今未破，祭奠!!!

作者：ctn924 回复日期：2003-07-22 03:01:28
怕麻木与忘却，所以——顶!

1.2 An associated post calling for mourning Li Shangpin and supporting Shen Yachuan (screenshot)


为李尚平老师过个教师节吧！ - Mozilla Firefox
Datei Bearbeiten Ansicht Gehe Lesezeichen Extras Hilfe
http://www5.tianya.cn/New/PublicForum/Content.asp?idWriter=
Go
Erste Schritte Aktuelle Nachrichten - I...
天涯社区
添加到天涯网藏
『关天茶舍』 为李尚平老师过个教师节吧！
分页链接：[1] [2] [3] [下一页] [回复此帖]
作者：老话 提交日期：2002-8-20 21:43:00
为李尚平老师过个教师节
（李尚平先生（1970—2002），系湖南省益阳市南塘中学英语教师，素有直声，好抱不平，以为公众利益尤以教师合法权益呼吁为快事，生前曾以网名“老九”在K12论坛、湖南红网红辣椒论坛、新华网等发了大量反映当地有关教师工资拖欠、教育腐败的帖子。2002年4月26日，李尚平在离家门400米处被伏击枪杀，此案至今未破。）
第一次在网上看到一个网名“老九”的老师贴的一个反映当地教师工资拖欠的帖子时，说实话，作为一个在教育媒体工作已有些时日的记者，我并没有特别在意。“狗咬人不是新闻”，这道理我想不说大家也能理解。但不久就有媒体登出这位真名叫李尚平的老师被枪杀的新闻。看着“子弹由后脑射入，穿脑从口出，右脸坍塌”等描述李尚平死状的文字，我目瞪口呆，久久沉默无语。
2000年7月我曾经到山东采访过一位名叫周昶的农村中学老师（见《教师之友》2000年第八期《我是“教育家”》）。和李尚平一样，周老师所反映的问题也是教师工资拖欠；所采用的方式也基本相同：除了借助一些传统媒体外，网络成了他们表达意见的主要出口；而且两人的个性也颇为相似——都有那个说皇帝没穿衣服的孩子的“耿直”劲。有所不同的是，周老师已经从公办学校“跳”了出来，现正在一家民办学校任职；而李尚平却已经永远从这个世界消失。
Fertig
Start
21:15


为李尚平老师过个教师节吧！ - Mozilla Firefox
Datei Bearbeiten Ansicht Gehe Lesezeichen Extras Hilfe
http://www5.tianya.cn/New/PublicForum/Content.asp?idWriter=
Go
Erste Schritte Aktuelle Nachrichten - I...
作者：静默之树 回复日期：2005-9-10 14:51:41
黑暗啊
作者：打死wo也不说 回复日期：2005-9-10 15:37:38
祭奠。
作者：桃园流浪人 回复日期：2005-9-10 16:34:09
愿在天之灵安宁！
作者：审判官 回复日期：2005-9-10 17:33:17
狗niang养的警察！
作者：朱中卿 回复日期：2005-9-10 17:35:19
李老师节日快乐！
致敬！
分页链接：[1] [2] [3] [下一页] [回复此帖]
接收邮件地址：
打包发送
关 闭
Fertig
Start
21:15

2. A public statement of famed liberal intellectuals and “intrainstitutional dissidents” against propaganda censorship institution, February, 2006.

关于冰点事件的联合声明

2006 年 1 月 24 日，《冰点》终被中宣部假手团中央的宣传机关下令停刊整顿，这是中国新闻恶性管理制度长期作祟的集中爆发。这是中国新闻界的重大历史性事件。

历史证明：只有极权制度需要新闻管制，妄想永远把大众蒙在鼓里，贯彻愚民政策，图谋“一言堂”万寿无疆。然而无情的现实证明：恶性新闻管制的土壤注定要生长出李大同、卢跃刚、杜涌涛、贺延光和他们那个形弱质坚永葆朝气的冰点群体。这是历史的唯物论，这是生活的辩证法，不会依任何人的欲念而转移。

《冰点》坚守理念，十年不易。他们编发广大作者的智慧和良知，体现出舆论监督权力、改造社会的巨大力量，受到了广泛、持续的赞扬。这样一份显示着先进性的党报周刊，竟遭蓄意封闭，消息传出，两岸舆论震惊或出意外，全球为之震动则属必然。

事出有因。它决非孤立个案。这是中宣部近几年屡屡封闭、改组诸如《新京报》、《岭南文化时报》、《环球经济导报》、《南方周末》、《南方都市报》，以及《书屋》、《同舟共进》、《方法》、《战略与管理》等等等等报刊杂志这类恶性管理行为的延续，其源大多出自该部的一个 “阅评小组”。中宣部把 “宣传”异化为 “管制”，代行政府权力，应属越权，构成违宪。“阅评组”自始以“审”代“阅”，以“判”代“评”，根本名不副实。他们为了钳制舆论，剥夺言论自由，除了扣帽子、打棍子之外，竟至发展到制造各类“黑名单 ”，暗中追查，待机而发，有时一个电话指示便完成了“执行”过程，使相对方失去了申辩的权利。他们的做法荒诞粗暴，全然不受法律约束。据知中央从未授予他们持有特权。他们甚至违背中央 16 届 5 中全会通过的文件精神，把励行法制，以法治国的国策从根本上架空。人们会提出问题：宣传机构不保护媒体，不保障言论自由，还有什么作用？

试看他们得胜称庆之后，人们得到的却只是舆论界尽失活气，新闻业几近枯萎。人们听不到争鸣，看不见和谐。“主流意识”也不知流到了何处。

然而，我们曾是高歌“不自由，毋宁死”追随革命进军建设的。诚然，我们都届暮年，但自信锐气不减，于是愿效梁任公“不惜以今日之我与昨日之我战”。回顾六七十年的教训，透过历史风云，深知一旦失去言论自由，当权者就只能听到一个声音，哪里会有心情舒畅，政通人和？而今纵览天下局势，又感悟一条规律：在集权制度向宪政制度转轨的历史关头，剥夺大众言论自由，不敢让人说话，一定会给政治转轨、社会转型埋下祸根，不免引发群体对抗，导致动荡。古往今来，执政者用暴力维持强权政治，得到了多少血的教训，我们怎能失忆？

言论自由对于提高执政能力不可一日缺失。其底线恰恰在于保障而不是给予，更不是赐予。而保障的基本要求应是：政权不得以国家的需要加以限制，例如不能借口“稳定”予以剥夺。经验证明：广开言路有助于“稳定”，处置孙志刚事件的经验是最好的

例证。自由的舆论释放了冤抑，社会矛盾得以缓解，并在一定程度上弥补了司法的缺陷。汕尾事件的教训，更从反面证明了我们的论断！

言论自由的意义不在于保守固有文明，而在于能够导向不断的创新。取消言论自由注定会妨害创造力的发挥，因而应当尽快立法，扩大公民的自由权利，保护媒体的言论自由，促进国家的进步兴旺，推动社会的健康发展。法国大革命产生的《人权和公民权宣言》，二战后出台的联合国《世界人权宣言》，对此都有示范性条款，何不接轨仿效？

概括以上申明，提出如下要求——

一、中宣部就冰点事件向中央提出书面报告，深刻检讨，汲取教训，撤销“阅评小组”。

二、全面恢复《冰点》周刊，不得“秋后算帐”。

三、尽快出台《新闻保护法》，废除一切恶性管制新闻的办法，保障新闻媒体的职业权利。

“愿殉自由死，终不甘为囚”；“自由昭临处，欣欣迎日华”。这是先烈狱中高歌的《自由颂》。我们将踏着先烈血痕，竭尽薄力去捍卫公民的自由权利；我们与《冰点》一同前行。

签名（以姓氏笔划为序）：
江平 朱厚泽 李锐 李普 何家栋 何方 邵燕祥 张思之 吴象 钟沛璋 胡绩伟 彭迪 戴煌
2006 年 2 月 2 日，于北京

3. Joint letter to NPC(Standing Committee) in support of Liu Di(Stainless Mouse) by 20 movement intellectuals and 757 following signatories.

关于刘荻案致全国人大代表及政协委员的公开信

各位代表、各位委员：

根据非官方消息的报道，北师大心理系四年级学生刘荻于 2002 年 11 月 7 日被北京市国家安全局带走，2002 年 12 月 15 日正式批捕。但据悉她的家属至今没有接触到相应的法定手续，例如拘留证、逮捕令、羁押地点等基本的办案文书均未送达。刘荻的父亲在接受采访时曾说：自从刘荻被捕，就好像 她从人间蒸发了一样。3 个多月的时间，此案未经公开报道，没有公开进入司法程序，没有任何部门出来确认逮捕的事实或澄清刘荻被绑架的传言。刘荻的家属甚至都不曾获准探视。从目前刘荻亲属朋友提供的情况，我们仅仅知道刘荻曾以“不锈钢老鼠”的网名在网络上发表了 10 余篇立意追求民主的文章，并参加了一个民间读书社团。为表达对刘荻的支持和对国家安全机关办案方式的质疑，3 个月来，网友们纷纷在自己的网名前加上“不锈钢”三个字。目前这一严重侵犯人权的事件已引起国内外媒体、舆论和海内外华人世界的广泛关注，曾有 1800 余人参与公开的签名活动声援刘荻，其中包括广大网友和不少在国际国内享有盛誉的学者和知名人士。

民主是我国的立国理想，是《中华人民共和国宪法》的重要内容，也是中国共产党不绝于耳的执政目标。言论、出版、结社自由更是宪法赋予每个公民的权利。凡中华人民共和国公民，在宪法规定范围内发表追求民主的言论，自当拥有不受非法拘捕的权利，其人身不可侵犯。现代法理告诉我们，思想无罪，刑罚不针对思想而只追究行为。世界上拥有成熟政治文明的国家无一不把公民的思想自由视作有助于国家兴盛的宝贵资源。走出“文革”的泥潭后，经过二十年市场经济和思想解放的历程，这个民族已经认识到，再也不能容许张志新、遇罗克、林昭等人的悲剧在今天重演了。维护国家安全是必要的，但国家安全再也不能是秘密警察横行的借口，更不是对于基本法治原则和司法程序的豁免理由。中共的“十六大”把加快政治文明建设确定为新世纪初期的一项重大政治任务。胡锦涛先生在纪念宪法公布施行 20 周年大会上强调：“（宪法）是保障公民权利的法律武器”，“维护宪法的权威，使宪法在全社会得到一体遵行”，“使一切违反宪法的行为都能及时得到纠正”。如果将公民行使言论和结社等宪法权利、积极追求和探索民主道路的行为上纲上线，则是对这一方向的背离。使公众怀疑中共加快政治文明进程的决心，怀疑中共领袖讲话的诚意，不利于树立中共第四代领导集体在国内国际复杂政治现实当中的政治威望，不利于维护宪法权威，更不利于保护每个公民的与生俱来的神圣权利。

刘荻还只有 22 岁，正当青春韶华。这个年轻体弱的女大学生关心国家前途，关注社会现实，有很强的社会责任感和正义感。读过她所撰文章的人们大多认为，在 80 年代出生的当代大学生中，刘荻称得上才华横溢，凤毛麟角。即使她因年轻和对民主的心切而使自己的言行越出了语境所能接受的程度，本身也应无危害国家安全的主观故意，不应当构成秘密拘捕和长期关押的理由。事实上，逮捕刘荻的结果并也没有起到反面的惩教作用，反而因危及到了人们的安全感而激起民间舆论的反弹，引起广泛的争议和批评，损害了社会对现政权的认同感，造成人们对政府的不满情绪上升，激化了矛盾，影响了社会的安定团结。同时作为联合国两个人权公约的签字国，这种粗暴的办案方式和对公民基本权利的漠视，会被给世界舆论责难我国人权现状提供口实。

在刘荻一案中，仅仅因为其涉嫌国家安全的罪名，基本的行政和司法程序竟然行之阙如，在执政党高扬宪法权威和法治精神的今天，这种法治的不在场、法治的死角和盲区足以令我们感到震惊。我们呼吁政府依法办案，公开办案。如果刘荻的确涉嫌犯罪，我们认为政府应在相关媒体上详细报道刘荻被刑事拘留和批捕的消息，及公布被捕的原因、被控的罪名。同时根据情况接受新闻媒体的采访和介入。北京市国家安全局应向刘荻家属说明案情，弥补一切相应的法律文书。如果在秘密逮捕过程中的确没有办理相应的法律手续，应说明法律依据；如果无法从现行法律中找到依据，就应尽快依法更正，并因办案程序不合法而取消逮捕，予以释放，并向刘荻及其家属公开道歉。我们同时敦促检察机关按照《人民检察院刑事诉讼规则》第三百八十条的规定：“人民检察院依法对公安机关的侦查活动是否合法实行监督”履行职责，依法追究有关责任人员随意侵犯公民基本权利的违法行为。基于上述考虑，我们认为，这件引起海内外广泛关注的事情解决得越快越好。越早解决，公众对国家和法律就会越快的恢复信心。

各位全国人大代表，各位全国政协委员，时代把把你们推上了民意代表的位置，时代把共和国的无上权力交给了你们。你们手上掌握着每个公民及其亲人们的财产和生命安全，肩负着维护宪法权威的使命，肩负着监督行政执法的责任。我们在此诚恳的要求你们（我们认为我们有权利这样要求），希望你们能行使手中的权力，担负起由民意代表的责任，体现出比一个 22 岁的女孩更大的勇气，为身陷囹圄的孩子振臂一呼，并积极督促相关执法部门，以法律的名义，早日还刘荻及同案的青年学生李毅兵一个公正，还法治精神一个清白。

向你们表示作为公民的敬意！

发起人 20 人（以签名先后为序）：

王 怡 杜导斌（自由撰稿人、湖北 432400） 刘晓波 任不寐 茉 莉（莫莉花 教师、瑞典） 高 寒（郭志 编辑、纽约）

梁晓燕 余世存 徐 晓 廖亦武 李 彪 余 杰 张伟国 张祖桦 赵达功 李 宾 王力雄 萧 瀚 刘军宁 谢泳

2003 年 2 月 28 日

签名人 757 人:

艾先（诗人，武汉 430061）
安润（学生、华东师大）
班布日（内蒙古）
包淳亮（台湾政治大学博士研究生 台湾 台北）
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曹维录（农民，天津）
曹宇震 （芜湖草鱼子 自由职业者 上海）
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陈滨（浙江）
陈晨
陈东（职员，北京　西城）
陈封（社区平民 ）
陈刚（职员，上海）
陈钢（商业，河南 453000）
陈光中（退休、重庆工商大学 C 区 400033）
陈汉（职员 深圳）
陈晖（学生）
陈建国（贵州 兴义 562400）
陈剑波（自谋职业，四川 621000）
陈孔章（自由撰稿人）
陈立华（打工者，深圳 518000）
谭刚强（心理咨询师，重庆高新渝州路 50 号 A3-11 协和心理顾问事务所 400039）
谭启迪（学生，成都，611630）
唐安平（IT，上海　200030）
唐捷（学生，成都）
唐山（大学学生 北京）
唐树英（研究员，北京）
唐元隽
陶业（美国）
田春来（网名：百姓点灯）
田玉秋
铁英波（程序员，上海）
屠雷（职员，武汉）
万年青（自由民，湖南 湘潭 411102）
万俟征（四川 攀枝花 617000）
万延海（公共卫生研究人员、北京 100101）
万梓欣（学生，成都）
汪峻平
汪纬联（学生）
汪瀛（学生）
汪昱（自由职业，北京　100035）
王冰晗（公司职员，北京）
王长荣（企业员工，北京 100081）
王臣（软件工程师，上海市普陀区 200062）
王城
王存道（工人 江苏）
王大为（ ENGINEER， 澳洲 维多利亚）
王丹（美国）
王丹（女）（加拿大）
王东成（大学教师、北京 100089）
王高浩(硕士，南京）

陈立群（美国）
陈利（计算机业，郑州）
陈破空（纽约）
陈琪（教师）
陈荣（哥伦比亚大学，纽约）
陈实（工人 北京）
陈泱潮（陈尔晋，泰国）
陈一静（广州 510620）
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